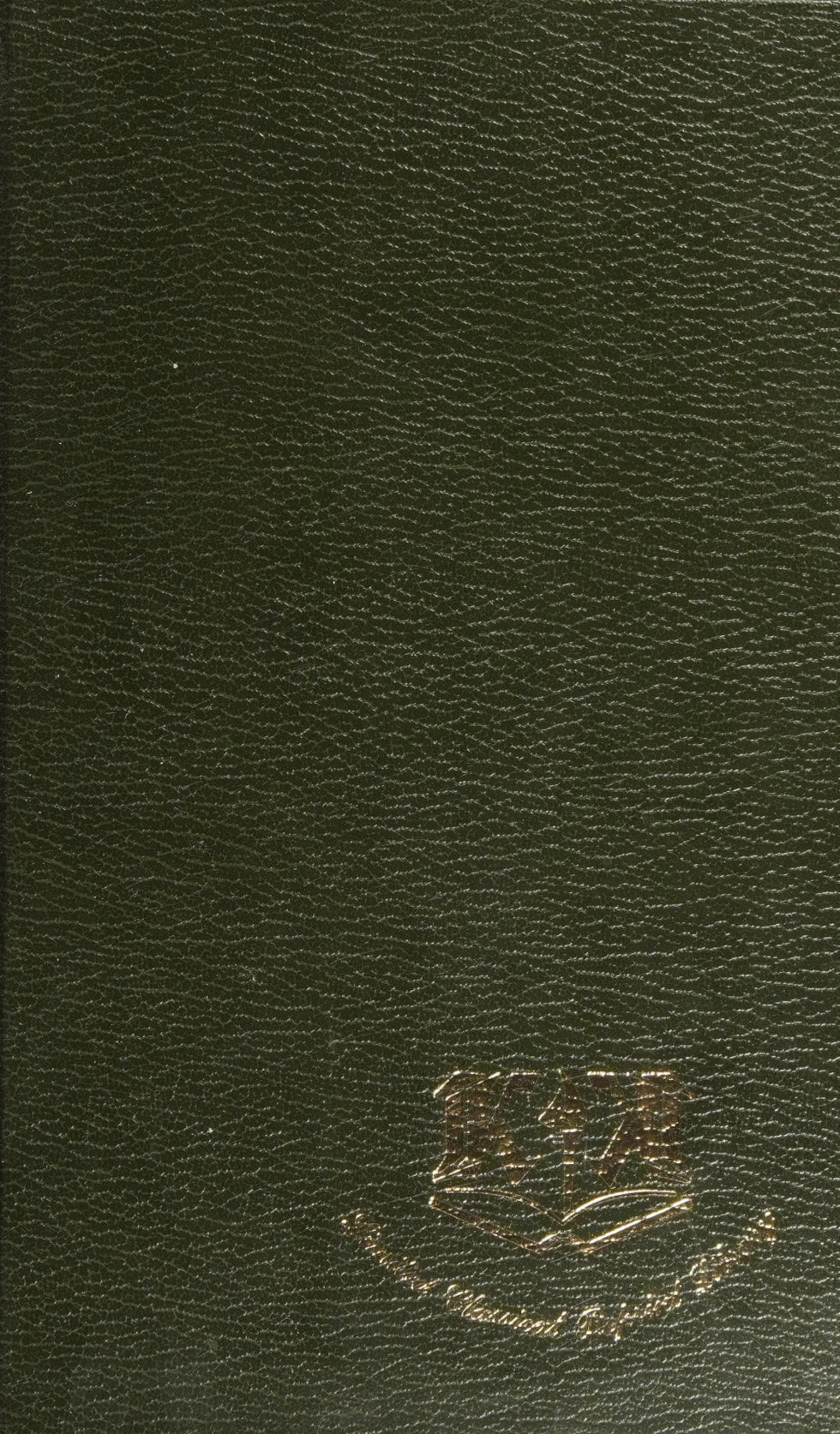

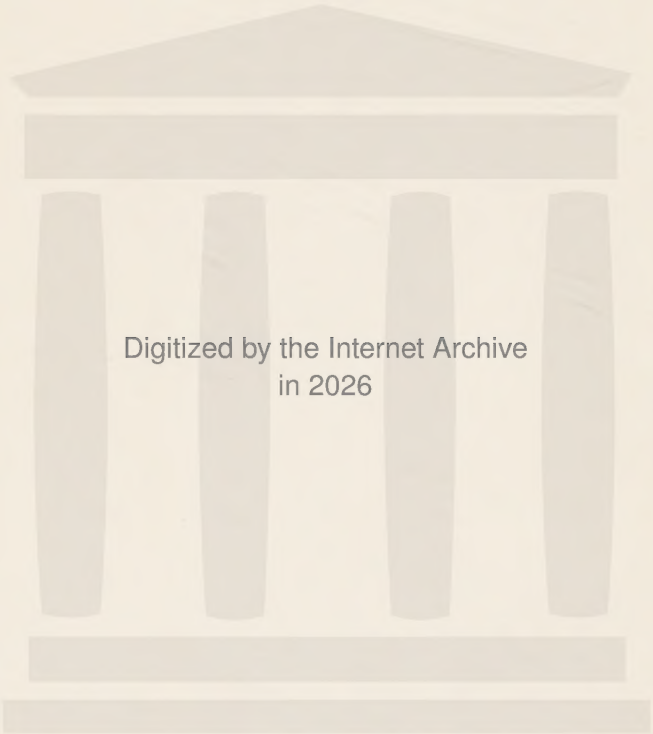
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THE

RESURRECTION OF LIFE:

AN EXPOSITION OF

FIRST CORINTHIANS XV.

WITH

A DISCOURSE ON OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION.

BY JOHN BROWN, D.D.,

SENIOR MINISTER OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION, BROUGHTON PLACE, EDINBURGH, AND PROFESSOR OF EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY TO THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Παῦλος ... τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ τὴν Ἀνάστασιν εὐηγγελίζετο.—Πράξ. τ. Ἀποστ. IZ ιή.

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FOREWORD

The name of John Brown means different things to different people. In Scotland it calls to mind the youthful shepherd whose insatiable desire to learn caused him to teach himself Latin, Greek and Hebrew while caring for his employer's sheep. He later became the beloved pastor of a congregation in Haddington.

The second John Brown was the eldest son of the John Brown of Haddington. He enjoyed the privilege of a formal education and received his doctorate from Edinburgh University. He followed his father in the pastoral ministry and spent fifty-six years as 'shepherd' of the congregation in Whitburn.

The third John Brown was the eldest son of John Brown of Whitburn. He too entered the ministry after studying at Edinburgh. Unlike his father and grandfather before him, he travelled extensively and on one of his visits to the United States was awarded the *honoris causa* degree of Doctor of Divinity by Jefferson College, Pennsylvania.

As with his forebears, John Brown was a prolific writer and authored numerous works during his lifetime. His most popular treatises included *Expository Discourses in First Peter* (1848), *Discourses on the Sayings of Our Lord* (1850), *An Exposition of Our Lord's Intercessory Prayer* (1850), *The Resurrection of Life* (1852), *The Sufferings and Glories of the Messiah* (1853), *Expository Discourses on Galatians* (1857), etc. His valuable commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews was published after his death.

In this present volume, Dr. Brown describes and defends the believer's hope in the second coming of Christ and ably champions the bodily resurrection. His handling of the text demonstrates his familiarity with the original languages, and his exposition of the text shows how skillful he was in making profound truths understandable to the average man.

It is a pleasure to be able to commend this fine exposition by John Brown of Edinburgh to Bible students today.

Cyril J. Barber

PREFACE.

If this Volume verify its title in any good measure, and be an Exposition of the Apostle Paul's Dissertation on the Resurrection of Life, no apology is required for its publication: if it do not, no apology that might be offered could be satisfactory.

The importance of the subject will be universally admitted; and its difficulty will be acknowledged most readily by those who have most carefully studied the Dissertation itself, and are most extensively acquainted with what has been attempted for its illustration.

Most of the interpretations which have been given of it have been examined; and, while all of them appear to me liable to objections, it is but justice to acknowledge that to some of them, as will appear from the margin, I have been greatly indebted; and that, probably, there is not one of them from which useful hints have not been derived.

I have done what I could to apprehend clearly,

and to expound distinctly, the meaning of the apostle; and the results of my labour are respectfully offered to the consideration of my brethren, and devoutly commended to the blessing of our common Lord. With Musculus, in reference to another divine oracle, I am ready to say, "Vincimur majestate eorum quæ in illo capite sunt ab apostolo dicta;" and to add, as he does, "Si cui datum est mysteria hæc penitius introspicere, communicet quod habet ecclesiæ Christi."[1]

The disproportion of the first—the introductory part—to the other parts of the Exposition, may probably strike some readers. It struck myself; but not till it was in type. The truth is, the illustration of the first eleven verses was originally written about thirty years ago, when I had no intention of expounding the remaining part of the chapter, and when I had some indistinct thoughts of giving to the public that illustration in a separate form. The subjects of the introductory part are so transcendantly important, in a practical point of view, that I can scarcely regret the large space they occupy in the Volume, though obtained at the expense of interfering with the symmetry of the Exposition, as a piece of exegetical art.

The Discourse on our Lord's Resurrection may be

[1] Musculus in Esa. lii. 13-liii. 12.

considered as a long note on the first section of the first part of the Exposition. The object in adding the articles in the Appendix must be obvious. They have all a direct bearing on the subject of the Treatise; they are all of superior merit; and, with perhaps a single exception, they all lie out of the way of the great body of readers.

This work, like some of its predecessors, has had the important advantage, during its passage through the press, of the supervision of my much-valued friend, the Rev. Dr John Taylor, of Auchtermuchty; and, if the numerous Greek and Latin quotations it contains be, as is believed, freer from mistakes than is common in publications of this sort, it is chiefly owing to the kindly-offered, and cheerfully-rendered, services of a young relative, every way qualified for such a work, by accurate knowledge of the two languages, and by the habit of correcting a classical press.

Arthur's Lodge, Newington,
December 1851.

CONTENTS.

THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE.

Page

PREFATORY ANALYSIS, ... 1

PART I. INTRODUCTORY.—1 Cor. xv. 1-11,—"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain: for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore, whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed." 6

SECT. 1. The Gospel, ... 7

SECT. 2. The right way of preaching the Gospel, . . . 26

(1.) The truth and its evidence must be stated, . . . 26

(2.) In this statement, there must be a constant reference to the Holy Scriptures, ... 35

(3.) This statement must be orderly, ... 37

(4.) This statement must be simple and perspicuous, . . 40

(5.) This statement must be frequently repeated, . . . 43

SECT. 3. The duty of those to whom the Gospel is rightly preached, 44

(1.) To receive it, ... 45

(2.) To retain it, ... 62

Page

Sect. 4. The result of the performance of this duty of receiving and retaining the Gospel, ... 76
(1.) Salvation, ... 77
1. A favourable change of state, ... 82
2. A favourable change of character, . . . 84
3. A favourable change of condition, . . . 85
(2.) The influence of the Gospel on the attainment of salvation, . 87
1. How the Gospel saves from guilt, . . . 88
2. How the Gospel saves from depravity, . . . 89
3. How the Gospel saves from misery, . . . 90

Part II. The Denial of the Resurrection inconsistent with the Belief of the Gospel.—1 Cor. xv. 12-19,—"Now, if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." 93

Sect. 1. Deduction from the thesis, 'There is no resurrection'—'Christ is not risen,' 99

Sect. 2. Deductions from the thesis, 'Christ is not risen,' . . 102
(1.) The apostles' preaching was vain, ... 103
(2.) The faith of Christians is vain, ... 106
1. They are yet in their sins, ... 106
2. They who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished, . 107
3. Christians are of all men most miserable, . . 109

Part III. The Resurrection of Christ secures the Resurrection of Life to all his People.—1 Cor. xv. 20-28,—"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto

Page

him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." . . . 114

Sect. 1. Introductory Expository remarks, ... 115

Sect. 2. That which led to Christ's resurrection—his vicarious death—secures the resurrection of life to his people, . . 120

Sect. 3. That to which Christ's resurrection led—his universal dominion—secures the resurrection of life to his people, . . 134

(1.) The risen Saviour is invested with unlimited power and authority, 142

(2.) The design of this investiture is, that he may bring back the kingdom to the Father, ... 145

(3.) In restoring the kingdom to the Father, Christ must put down all opposing rule, and authority, and power, . . . 147

(4.) Of our Lord's putting down all rule, and authority, and power, the destruction of death will be the crowning act, . 150

(5.) All this is to be effected by Divine power, administered by the Son, to the glory of the Father, ... 153

Part IV. The Denial of the Resurrection makes it absurd to embrace or propagate Christianity, and leads to licentious conclusions.—1 Cor. xv. 29-34,—"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die. Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." 155

Sect. 1. Introductory Expository Remarks, ... 155

Sect. 2. If there be no resurrection, it is absurd to embrace Christianity, 158

Sect. 3. If there be no resurrection, it is absurd to propagate Christianity, ... 169

Sect. 4. If there be no resurrection, man's wisest course is to devote himself to a life of pleasure, ... 174

Part V. Objections answered.—1 Cor. xv. 35-41,—"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what bodies do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the

Page

terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory." 179

Sect. 1. The first objection—that from the impossibility of the resurrection—answered, ... 180

Sect. 2. The second objection—that in reference to the mode of the resurrection—answered, ... 184

Part VI. The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead farther unfolded.—1 Cor. xv. 42-54.—" So also is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; (for the trumpet shall sound;) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 189

Sect. 1. The difference between the present body and the resurrection-body, ... 189

(1.) The one is corruptible, the other is incorruptible, . . 190

(2.) The one is degraded, the other glorious, . . . 191

(3.) The one is weak, the other is powerful, . . . 193

(4.) The one is natural, the other is spiritual, . . . 193

Sect. 2. The ground of the difference between the present body and the resurrection-body, ... 203

Part VII. Conclusion.—1 Cor. xv. 55-58,—" O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved

Page

brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." 219

Sect. 1. The Thanksgiving, ... 220

Sect. 2. The Exhortation, ... 229

(1.) The duties enjoined, ... 230

1. Immoveable stedfastness, ... 230

2. Excelling in the work of the Lord, ... 233

(2.) The motives urged, ... 236

ON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

2 Timothy ii. 8.—"Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel."

Preliminary Remarks, ... 243

Part I. The Apostolic Testimony respecting the Resurrection of Christ, ... 247

Part II. The Evidence of the Apostolic Testimony, . . 258

Sect. 1. It accounts for undoubted facts, otherwise unaccountable, 259

(1.) The sepulchre being found empty, ... 259

(2.) The change which took place in the apostles, . . 262

(3.) The testimony being immediately, and to a great extent, credited, 263

Sect. 2. It stands all the ordinary tests of credibility, . . 264

Sect. 3. It was confirmed by miracles, ... 269

Part III. Importance of the Apostolic Testimony, . . 270

Sect. 1. Its doctrinal importance, ... 270

(1.) A general attestation of the truth of Christianity, . . 271

(2.) A special attestation of particular doctrines, . . . 272

Sect. 2. Its practical importance, ... 274

(1.) It relieves the conscience burdened with guilt, . . 275

(2.) It comforts amid the afflictions of life, . . . 275

(3.) It is a motive to diligence and perseverance in duty, . 276

APPENDIX.

No. I. On the Evidence of the Resurrection of Christ. Horsley, . 281

No. II. The Conversion of Jonathan, a Jew—first a Sadducee, then a Pharisee,—to Christianity by the Resurrection of Christ. Sandeman, ... 283

No. III. A Parable. Hallett, ... 296

No. IV. A Second Parable. Hallett, ... 300

INDEX.

Page

I. Of Principal Matters, ... 303

II. Of Greek Words or Phrases remarked on, ... 305

III. Of Authors quoted or referred to, ... 306

IV. Of Texts of Scripture remarked on, ... 308

THE

RESURRECTION OF LIFE.

1 COR. XV.

PREFATORY ANALYSIS.

THE dissertation on the Resurrection of Life, contained in this chapter, resolves itself into seven parts.

The first of these parts, reaching from the first verse to the eleventh, is introductory. It contains a statement, of the resurrection of Christ, who had died, the just for the unjust, and its varied and abundant evidence; and of the facts that the apostle had preached these good news to the Corinthians, and that they had received them, and continued to hold them; together with an intimation that their highest interests were bound up with their persevering faith in Christ, as "delivered for their offences, and raised again for their justification."

The second part, which commences with the twelfth verse and terminates with the nineteenth, opens with an expression of astonishment that, in these circumstances, "some of the Corinthians should say that there is no resurrection of the dead!"—a dogma which plainly involved in it the denial of Christ's resurrection, one of the primary doctrines of the Gospel which the apostle had preached and they received,—and is chiefly occupied with unfolding the consequences which necessarily flow from that denial of Christ's resurrection, which was virtually implied in the assertion

that there is no resurrection. Its substance may be thus given :—' How, professing to hold the doctrine so clearly stated, so fully proved to you, and so cordially received by you, that Christ having " died for your sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,"—how, professing to hold this doctrine, can any of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? Do you not perceive, that if there be no resurrection, it is impossible that Christ should have risen? and do you not equally perceive, that " if Christ be not risen, our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain?" We have told, and you have believed, a lie. We are impostors, and you are fools. " Ye are yet in your sins." Guilt remains unexpiated; pardon is unprocured; sanctification and salvation are impossible. There is no propitiatory sacrifice, no transforming Spirit, for you. Your brethren who have died in the faith of the Gospel and the hope of immortality, have, on the principle that Christ is not risen, and there is no resurrection, perished, in the sense of ceasing to exist; or they have perished in a still more fearful meaning of the word; and we who have embraced Christianity, following them, as in this case we must, into the abyss of annihilation or perdition, after a life of self-denial, sacrifice, and suffering, are the most foolish and pitiable of men.'

In the third part, which begins with the twentieth verse, and ends with the twenty-eighth, the apostle, assuming the truth of Christ's resurrection, the evidence for which he had stated in the introduction—evidence most abundant and satisfactory in itself,—and corroborated by those absurd revolting conclusions to which the denial of Christ's resurrection necessarily leads,—proceeds to show the security which Christ's resurrection affords for the resurrection of his people; making it evident that as, if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ cannot have risen,—so, if Christ has risen, then there must be a resurrection of the dead. The security afforded by Christ's resurrection for the resurrec-

tion of his people is twofold,—that which results from what led to his resurrection, and that which results from what his resurrection led to,—that which flows from his death in the room of his people, and that which flows from his reign for the benefit of his people. The first of these is illustrated from the beginning of the twentieth verse to the first clause of the twenty-fourth verse. The second is illustrated from the second clause of the twenty-fourth verse to the end of the twenty-eighth verse. The substance of the first illustration is, 'Christ's resurrection, as the result of his penal, vicarious, expiatory death as the representative-man, was a proof that that death had served its purpose, and, therefore, a proof that all his people should, in due time, be delivered from all the penal consequences of sin, among the rest, death.' The substance of the second illustration is, 'Christ rose that he might reign. His Father has given him power and authority, absolute and unlimited as to creatures, delegated and subordinate only in reference to essential divinity—power and authority, in the exercise of which it is certain that he shall destroy all things which oppose the design of God as to the final and complete happiness of his people, and among these death, the last enemy.

In the fourth part, opening with the twenty-ninth verse, and closing with the thirty-fourth, the apostle shows how utterly motiveless and irrational, on the supposition of there being no resurrection, would be the conduct of those who embrace, profess, and propagate Christianity, at such risks and sacrifices as were required in the primitive age, and how much more reasonable it would be, on such a hypothesis, for them to act on the principle of the Epicurean philosophy, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we must die,"—seizing the opportunity thus given him, by showing the practical tendency of the denial of the resurrection, to warn the Corinthians of the hazard of their being led into error, by having the purity of their moral habits corrupted by intercourse with the wicked,—calling them to rouse themselves

from that stupor which worldly associations have a tendency to induce, and to guard against mistakes naturally growing out of it, which must be injurious—may be fatal; and intimating that the existence of such a state of mind, in reference to the resurrection, was a plain evidence that there was in some quarters an ignorance of God, which, in their circumstances, was not merely blameworthy but shameful.

The fifth part, beginning with the thirty-fifth verse, and ending with the forty-first, is occupied with a reply to the cavils of those who said that there was no resurrection, calculated and intended to remove the doubts and difficulties which, by their statements, they might have produced on the minds of genuine believers. These cavils are two: "How are the dead raised?" *i. e.*, 'How can the dead live again?' and, "With what bodies do they come" from the grave—with the same bodies laid in the grave, or with different bodies, and if different, how, in what respects, different? The reply to the first question is to be found in verse thirty-sixth. The rest of the section is taken up with the answer to the second question.

The answer to the first question is substantially this:—'Your question, How can the dead live? how can life come out of death? is a foolish one. It is no uncommon thing for death to intervene, when there is to be progress from a lower kind or degree of life to a higher kind or degree of life. In the vegetable world, it is not the blossom or the seed, full of succulence and life, that, in a continuance of that life, becomes a separate plant; the seed must wither and die—become dead-ripe,—and it is out of this dead seed cast into the earth that a higher development of vegetable life springs.'

The answer to the second question is given more in detail, and is included in verses 37-41. After stating that the plant that springs from the seed is very different from the seed from which it springs, though belonging to the same species, and, indeed, growing out of it, and having remarked that matter, though consisting of the same simple elements,

admits of an endless diversity of forms, suited to the place it is intended to occupy, and the purposes it is intended to serve—to form the bodies of fishes, birds, and land-animals, or such heavenly bodies as the sun, the moon, and the stars, or such earthly bodies as rocks, and mountains, and seas, and all the varieties of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms,—he applies these analogies, and gives additional information, in reference to the resurrection of the dead.

This forms the sixth part of the dissertation, reaching from verse 42-54. 'What is raised is the same as what was laid in the grave, and yet is very different. It is what is sown that grows up; it is what is buried that is raised. But what was a corruptible, dishonoured, weak body in the present state, shall, in the resurrection-state, be incorruptible, glorious, and powerful. What was, in the present state, a body primarily suited to the exercise and development of the animal part of our immaterial principle, shall, in the resurrection-state, be a body primarily suited to the exercise and development of the spiritual part of our immaterial principle.'

On this last statement, as chiefly important, the apostle dwells. 'There is,' says he, 'such a distinction as that which I have noticed. There is an animal body, and there is a spiritual body. We derive the one from our first representative; we shall obtain the second from our second representative. The first Adam, formed of the dust of the earth, an inanimate body, was made into a living animal—his body thus becoming an animal body,—and this is the body we receive from him. The last Adam, having become dead in the flesh—having died in that animal body which he assumed to offer as a sacrifice for us—by the power of God not only received a spiritual body, but was made a quickening spirit, having power to give spiritual bodies to all who are his. And the animal goes before the spiritual. That is the established order. It did so in the case of our representative; it will do so with us. The first man was of the earth, earthy; his body suited its residence. The second

man—the Lord—is from heaven, heavenly; his body suits its residence. In this respect there is a similarity between the represented and their representatives. The earthy—the bodies living on the earth—are like the body of their earthy natural progenitor. The heavenly—the bodies which are to live in heaven—are to be like the body of their heavenly spiritual head. And, as we have all borne, and do bear, the image of the earthy head in the animal body, we shall wear the likeness of the heavenly head in the spiritual body. The body, in the present state, is not fit for heaven; and, even in the case of those who do not die, but are found alive on the earth at the coming of the Lord, a change, in its effects on the body, similar to that produced by death and resurrection, must take place, to fit them for the kingdom of God.'

The seventh part, which is the conclusion, divides itself into two portions—a triumphant thanksgiving and a solemn exhortation. The triumphant thanksgiving is contained in the fifty-fifth, fifty-sixth, and fifty-seventh verses; the solemn exhortation in the fifty-eighth verse.

PART I.—INTRODUCTORY.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 1-11.—"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain: for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore, whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed."

The Gospel—the right way of preaching the Gospel—the right way of receiving the Gospel—and the blessed effects

of the Gospel, when rightly preached and rightly received, are the topics to which this passage of Scripture calls our attention.

§ 1. *The Gospel.*

Let us, in the first place, then, make that Gospel,[1] which the apostle states that he had preached to the Corinthians, the subject of consideration. "I declare[2] unto you the Gospel," says he, "which I have preached unto you." The Saxon word "Gospel,"[3] like the Greek word of which it is a literal translation, signifies agreeable intelligence, a joyful announcement, good news, glad tidings; and is, in the New Testament, ordinarily employed as a descriptive designation of the revelation of Divine mercy to our lost world,—the divinely-inspired account of the only way in which guilty, depraved, and miserable men may be delivered from sin and its consequences, obtain the Divine approbation and favour, be raised to the true dignity and excellence of their intellectual and moral nature, in the knowledge of God, and conformity to his mind and will, and be made happy in all the variety, and to the full extent, of their capacities of enjoyment, and during the whole eternity of their being, by the free grace of God, and "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."[4] The sum and substance of that revelation is contained in the statement made by the apostle in the third and fourth verses of this chapter,—"that Christ

[1] Chrysostom, Œcumenius, and some of the Latin Fathers, suppose that there is a reference to the gospel by Luke, which was supposed to be written under Paul's direction. There can be no reasonable doubt that the reference is to Paul's personal preaching. Chap. iv. 15.

[2] "γνωρίζω—ὑπομιμνήσκω."—ŒCUMENIUS.

[3] God spel.

[4] "τὸ εὐαγγέλιον primum quidem τὸ κήρυγμα Christi significat; deinde et illa per quæ κήρυγμα illud confirmatum est, id est historiam de vita, miraculis, morte, resurrectione et in cœlum evectione Christi."—GROTIUS. The meaning is sometimes obscured when "gospel," which has with us only its technical sense is given as the rendering for εὐαγγέλιον in its primitive sense of good news, *e. g.*, Gal. iii. 8; Heb. iv. 2. In both of these cases the obscurity is increased by the use of the term, ordinarily used in a technical sense, "preached."

died for our sins[1] according to the Scriptures; and was buried, and rose again from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures."

The Gospel proceeds on the supposition that mankind are sinners, and that, in consequence of their being sinners, they are in a state of extreme degradation, danger, and misery; and it announces the means of certain and complete deliverance from this state. It takes for granted what the Word of God so plainly states, and what is so consonant with all that we see around us and feel within us—that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"—forfeited the Divine approbation—that every man has violated the regard due to the Divine will, by doing what he knew to be wrong, and neglecting to do what he knew to be right—that sin is an abominable thing which God hates—that his "wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men"—that he will not, that he cannot, by any means clear the guilty—that men are "alienated from the life of God"—that they contemn God, forget God, hate God—that "the imaginations of the thoughts of their heart are only evil, and that continually,"—that they who are thus "far from God" must "perish"—that they who are thus without holiness cannot "see the Lord" in mercy. The Gospel thus supposes not merely a slight derangement, but a complete and fatal revolution in man's relations to the Divine moral government,—that from being a cherished subject he has become a condemned criminal, and that his happiness, which that government once secured, is now inconsistent with its great ends. It supposes not merely an occasional and partial disorder, but a radical and universal disease of his moral constitution. The Prophet Isaiah's description of the state of his country is no hyperbole here,—"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness."[2] The

[1] "ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν. ὑπὲρ is not for περί, but should be rendered *on account of*, Rom. iv. 25."—BLOOMFIELD.

[2] Isa. i. 5, 6.

statement made in the Gospel cannot well be understood, far less believed—the blessings which it holds out cannot well be appreciated, far less received, without a clear apprehension, a firm conviction, that, on the one hand, every man has, by his violation of the holy, just, and good law of God, put himself under the ban of the Divine empire—placed his happiness, in the ordinary course of things, in direct antagonism with the honour of the Divine character, and the stability of the Divine government, and that nothing within the compass of created power and wisdom can avail to bring it again into accordance with these; and that, on the other, by the utter depravation of his moral nature, he has rendered himself at once unfit and indisposed for that intercourse with God, which is the true source of all the excellence and happiness in a created being, and that there is no redeeming principle in his nature to produce restoration to spiritual health,[1] but that, left to himself, he must sink deeper and deeper in depravity and wretchedness, retire farther and farther from God, and that if sovereign mercy do not interfere, he must, both from the Divine sentence of condemnation, and the native operation of his own depravity, spend his eternity in outer darkness—in "the lake of fire," in the abyss of perdition.

Such is the view which in the Gospel is taken of the state, and character, and prospects of fallen mankind; and containing, as it does, a plain, well-accredited, infallible account of the only and the certain way of escaping the greatest of all evils —evils which have all been incurred, and are in the course of a steady, complete development—and of obtaining the corresponding blessings, which are of proportional magnitude and duration, it amply merits the appellation it assumes—"the good news, the glad tidings." It announces the fact that guilty, depraved, miserable man may be delivered from the condemnation, slavery, and punishment of sin—may be

[1] "Vis medicatrix."

restored to the favour, image, fellowship, and enjoyment of God; it details the series of divine dispensations by which this most wonderful and delightful revolution in the relations, and character, and condition of mankind is to be accomplished; it shows how the salvation of sinners by this series of divine dispensations, instead of obscuring, illustrates the glories of divine purity and rectitude, and instead of subverting or weakening, powerfully confirms and establishes the fundamental principles of the Divine moral government; and, on the ground of these statements, it invites every human being to receive in the faith of the truth the full salvation which it is fitted not only to exhibit, but to convey, as the gift of Divine "grace reigning through righteousness" unto the eternal life of every believer, through Christ Jesus. All this is substantially done in the summary of the Gospel contained in the text, "I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which ye also have received, and wherein ye stand; by which ye also are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain: For I delivered unto you first of all, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again from the dead according to the Scriptures."[1] This is "the gospel of God,"—"the gospel of the grace of God"—"the gospel of Christ"—"the gospel of our salvation"—"the gospel of peace"—"the glorious gospel"—"the everlasting gospel."

It sounds strange in many ears that these simple statements, "that Christ died[2] for our sins, according to the

[1] "This passage, in connection with Eph. iv. 4-6, Heb. vi. 1, &c., 1 John iv. 2, constitutes the symbol (τύπον διδαχῆς) of the apostolic church."—OLSHAUSEN. It is deeply to be regretted that the introduction of error into the church by men professedly holding this symbol made it necessary to enlarge the creed; but it may be doubted if the limits of that necessity have not been overleaped in the very voluminous symbols adopted by the churches in later ages. In many cases, what were meant for Testimonies, Defences, and Explanations, have been converted into Creeds, a purpose they do not seem to have been intended—which certainly, from their prolixity and minuteness, they are not fitted—to serve.

[2] "ἀπέθανεν. Vere, non imaginario" (Grotius); so that the resurrection was a real resurrection. To give prominence to this idea, καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη is added.

Scriptures, that he was buried, and that he rose again, according to the Scriptures," are the gospel, the apostolical gospel, by the belief of which a man shall assuredly be saved; and a feeling of something like incredulous wonder pervades the mind, seeking utterance in such a question as this, 'Can the belief of this statement indeed do so much for man—do for him what no amount of intellectual or active exertion could do for him—put him in possession of the heavenly, spiritual blessings of the salvation that is in Christ, with eternal glory?' But there is more, much more, in the statement than may appear on a cursory glance; and if we prosecute in a right spirit, and to a due extent, the inquiries, WHO is this of whom the apostle speaks?—What is the meaning of the designation he gives him—Christ?—and what is necessarily imported in his "dying for our sins according to the Scriptures, and being buried, and rising again on the third day, according to the Scriptures"? we shall not wonder that the apostle should term this the gospel—that he should attribute to it such a wondrous efficacy, and that he should state that this, having occupied the first place in the message as he received it from his Master, must occupy the first place in it as delivered by him to his fellow-men.

First, then, let us inquire, Who is this of whom the apostle speaks? It is of primary importance that we should have clear, accurate conceptions here. He was a very singular person of whom the apostle speaks. None but HE could have done the great work which is the subject of the good news—"die for our sins." Unless we know HIM, the message may well appear to us an incredible one. Unless we know HIM, we cannot believe it; and therefore it cannot be to us good news. If we could believe, in reference to any one but HIM, what is said here, we should believe a lie which might delude and destroy, but could not save us. Who, then, is HE? Christ is not his name, properly speaking:—Christ, like "Baptist," is a word descriptive of office and work. Its import will come to be considered by-and-bye.

The question now before us is *Who* Christ is. Now, beyond all question, he is a man—"the man Christ Jesus."[1] He is "bone of our bone"—"flesh of our flesh." He was born of a woman; he performed the ordinary functions, and was liable to the common accidents of humanity; he lived the life and died the death of a man. But he was a very remarkable and altogether singular man. Born of a virgin mother, he had no human father, and was thus in a sense peculiar to himself "the seed of the woman." He was also a faultless, a perfect man. He was "in all things made like unto his brethren,"[2] but in this, that "he knew no sin"—"in him there was no sin."

But had he been no more than a miraculously produced, an absolutely holy man, he never could have performed the great work, the accomplishment of which is the subject of the Gospel, and makes it glad tidings. This miraculously produced, perfectly holy man, is an incarnation of Divinity—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life" in him "was the light of men." "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."[3] They who "beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father," have declared to us "that which was from the beginning" respecting the Word of life—this revealed living One, who "was with the Father, and was manifested" to them, as well as what they "heard and saw, and looked on and handled."[4] And what do they testify of him? They tell us what he told them—that he and the Father are one—that he is the "I AM" who was before Abraham. They declare that he is "God manifest in flesh"—that he is "the great God our

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 5. [2] Heb. ii. 17. [3] John i. 1-5, 10, 14. [4] 1 John i. 1, 2.

Saviour"—"God over all blessed for ever"—"the true God and eternal life"—that "by him all things were created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; that "all things were created by him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist"—that he is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person" —that he is "made as much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance received a more excellent name than they"—that Jehovah bids him reign along with Himself, and that an inspired writer speaks to him in this wise, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever"—that he is "the First and the Last, and the living One"—that he "searches the hearts," and has a power "whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself."[1] The great truth brought before the mind in these declarations—and they are but a specimen of what might have been brought forward—is the proper Deity of the Saviour of men. This idea was ever present to the minds of the apostles when they spoke of him; and we shall not understand their statements as they meant them to be understood, if that idea be not present to our minds when we read them. He, then, of whom the apostle speaks was the God-man, whose proper name was Jesus—not an uncommon name among the Jews, though having a significancy as applied to him, the Saviour, the divine Saviour—and whose official designation was Christ.

The meaning of this designation is the second point into which we must inquire.[2] "Christ" is just the English form of a Greek word, corresponding to the Hebrew word "Messiah," and to the English word "anointed." Now, what is the meaning of "the Anointed One," as applied to him of whom the apostle speaks? Unction, from a very early age, was the emblem of consecration, or setting apart a person or thing, as qualified for a sacred purpose.

[1] John viii. 58. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 3, 4, 8. Rev. i. 11.
[2] *Vide* Kitto's Cyclopædia,—art. *Jesus Christ.*

Under the Jewish dispensation, this rite took place sometimes, if not uniformly, in the case of prophets and kings,—uniformly in the case of the high priest. In the prophetic Scriptures, this appellation is given to an illustrious Deliverer who was to arise out of the family of David. In giving this appellation to their Master, the apostles meant to intimate that he was that illustrious Deliverer; that he was "he of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write;" that all that is said of the person, and work, and glory of the Messiah, or Christ, or Anointed One, is true of him; that he is the great revealer of divine truth, the only expiator of human guilt, and reconciler of man to God,—the supreme and sole legitimate ruler over the understandings, consciences, and affections of men,—the prophet, priest, and king of the race; that he was divinely appointed, divinely qualified, divinely commissioned, to fill these offices and perform these functions; and that he was divinely accredited, as filling these offices, and performing these functions. Such is the import of the appellation "Christ," "the anointed." He, then, of whom the apostle speaks is Divinity incarnate in the person of the Son; and this God-man is divinely appointed, qualified, commissioned, and accredited, as the Deliverer of men from the ignorance and error, the guilt and condemnation, the bondage, the depravity, and wretchedness, of their fallen condition.

Let us now inquire what is imported by this illustrious person's "dying for our sins[1] according to the Scriptures." To die "for sins," in the language of Scripture, is to die suffering the punishment of sin,—enduring the evils in which God manifests his displeasure at sin. When a man dies for his own sins, he suffers death as the punishment due

[1] "ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. Phrasis est in N. F. usitatissima, qua Christus dicitur fuisse mortuus, seu mortem subiisse ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, vel simpliciter ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. Sciendum autem et rite tenendum est ἀποθανεῖν ὑπέρ τινος non tantum in N. T. sed etiam apud scriptores profanos significare *mori loco alterius*, ut certe Christus non tantum *in commodum* nostrum mortuus est, sed *nostrum loco* mortem subire non recusavit quam nos fueramus commeriti."—VALCKNAER. ὑ τ. ἁ. ἡ = διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν.—Rom. iv. 25.

to his violations of the Divine law. When Christ is said to die for sins, the sins are not his own, for he had none; they are the sins of men. And when he is said to die for their sins, the meaning is, that in dying, he underwent the punishment of their sins,—he endured the evils they deserved, the evils in which God manifested his displeasure at their sins; that he endured these evils in order to expiate their sins, to make it consistent with the character of God as a holy and just God to pardon their sins, and to bring them into a state in which they should be delivered both from the demoralising and misery-creating influences of guilt, and brought into that state of nearness to God which is necessary both to holiness and happiness, and from which unforgiven guilt necessarily excludes.

That the Messiah was thus to suffer for sins, was intimated in the Old Testament Scriptures. The whole of the Levitical expiations for sin, in reference to the violator of Moses' law, and their consequences in saving him from the penalty of his transgression, and opening up the way for his entering into the congregation of the Lord, and having renewed intercourse with Him as his God and King,—were intended to be emblematical of the Messiah dying for sins; and thus expiating sin, and saving men from the punishment of sin, and bringing them to God in renewed friendship, moral assimilation, and holy fellowship. The prophets had declared that Messiah was to be "cut off, but not for himself;" that he was to "finish transgression, make an end of sin, bring in an everlasting righteousness;" that by doing the will of God he was to do what sacrifice and offering—burnt-offering and sin-offering—had been unable to accomplish; that when men had gone astray like sheep every one in his own way, God was to make to fall on him the iniquities of us all; that exaction should be made, and that he should be responsible; that he was to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; that the chastisement of our peace was to be so laid on him, as

that we should be healed by his stripes; that he should be smitten to death for the transgression of his people; that he should bear the iniquities of many, and, in consequence of having done so, justify them by the knowledge of himself; that he should "pour out his soul unto death, be numbered with transgressors, and bear the sins of many, and make intercession for the transgressors." [1]

The apostle's statement, then, is this: 'The declarations of the prophets respecting the expiation of human guilt by the Messiah have been fulfilled. Prediction has become history. The God-man Deliverer from error and guilt, and depravity and endless misery, has appeared in the person of Jesus, and, by his death for sins, in the room of sinners, has borne and borne away the sins of the world. He has given himself a ransom for many. He has died, the just in the room of the unjust. He has borne our sins in his own body to the tree. He has given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savour to God. The Lord has been well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he hath magnified the law and made it honourable. The divinity of his person has given infinite value to his sacrifice. "We have redemption through *his* blood, who is the image of the invisible God." [2] More honour has been done the law in *his* obedience than could have been done by the obedience of the unsinning race of man—more honour done by *his* sufferings and death than could have been done by the everlasting sufferings of the sinning race of man. "Christ hath come a high-priest of good things to come, and through a greater and more perfect tabernacle than that raised by Moses, a tabernacle not made with hands, and not by the blood of goats and of calves, but by his own blood hath entered in once unto the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. And this blood of *Him*, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purges the conscience

[1] Isa. liii. 4, 5, 11, 12. [2] Col. i. 14-16.

from dead works to serve the living God." He has "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The law could not by its continual sacrifices take away sin. It was not, indeed, possible that the blood of bulls and goats should make expiation; "wherefore, when he came into the world, he said, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not; but a body hast Thou prepared me: In burnt-offerings and *sacrifices* for sin Thou hast had no pleasure: Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all*."—"For by that one offering he hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified." [1] The great promise of the new covenant, "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," can proceed only on a completed and an all-efficacious sacrifice. "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham, a free and full justification, might come on us Gentiles, and that we, believing, might receive the promised Spirit." "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures," is just equivalent to "we are justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness;" "that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;" "for He hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." [2]

In the apostle's statement of the Gospel, he mentions not only our Lord's death for our sins according to the Scriptures, but his burial according to the Scriptures, and his rising again according to the Scriptures. The burial of our Lord was the proof of the reality of his death;[3] and how

[1] Heb. ix. 11-15; x. 1-18. [2] Rom. iii. 25. 2 Cor. v. 19-21.
[3] "Sepultus est, ut qui vere mortuus."—MAXIMUS TAURINENSIS.

important such a proof was, appears from the consideration that he could not have expiated sin, had he not died; for death was the penalty of the law which man had broken. And this burial was according to the Scriptures, which had said, many ages before he became incarnate, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," in the separate state, "neither wilt Thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption"[1] in the grave —plain evidence that his soul must be in the separate state, and his body where human bodies generally do see corruption. "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death."[2] He *did* die; for he was *buried* according to the ancient oracles.

The death of our Lord, viewed as the subject of good news to man, is even more closely connected with his resurrection[3] than with his burial. His death for sin, and his burial, would not have been good news, had they not been followed by his resurrection. Had he not risen, "our faith had been vain; we had yet been in our sins." Had he not risen, it had been a proof that, if his death was a sacrifice, that sacrifice had not been "a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour." If the surety is kept in prison, surely the debt is not paid. Our hopes would have died with him, and been buried in his grave. But the empty grave, empty by a resurrection which could be effected only by the power of God, proves that the Judge is satisfied. He only could open the doors of that prison.

"Our Surety freed, proclaims us free
For whose offences he was seized;
In his release our own we see,
And joy to see Jehovah pleased."

If the burial proves the *reality*, still more directly and completely does the resurrection prove the *efficacy*, of our Lord's death for the expiation of sin. "It is finished," said he when he expired on the cross; "It is finished," proclaimed

[1] Psal. xvi. 10. [2] Isa. liii. 9.

[3] The resurrection is described by two words in the New Testament, ἀναστῆναι, and ἐγερθῆναι, in reference to two figurative views of death,—a fall, and a sleep.

the righteous Judge, when, as "the God of peace," the reconciled Divinity, He "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the everlasting covenant." When God raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, he gave us good ground for good hope in himself, as him who blotteth out transgression for his own sake.

This resurrection is "according to the Scriptures." The oracle already referred to in the sixteenth Psalm, repeatedly quoted in the New Testament, and the declaration in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah,[1] that, after making his soul an offering for sin, after[2] having his grave appointed with the wicked, and being with the rich while in the state of the dead, he was to see his seed, and prolong his days, are predictions of the resurrection. The phrase "according to the Scriptures" is to be limited to "rose again;" for that he was to rise *on the third day*, though predicted by himself, was not the subject of Old Testament prophecy. To suppose that Isaac's restoration to his mother on the third day, or Jonah's being in the fish's belly for three days, are referred to here as symbolical prophecies, is quite unwarranted; and to apply the words in Hosea vi. 2, "After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight," is to interpret Scripture by the sound, and not by the sense.[3] It is not more satisfactory to find, as Dr Doddridge does, in the oracle declaring that God would not suffer his Holy One to see corruption, a prediction that the Messiah would rise on the third day, inasmuch as it has been supposed that on that day dead bodies begin to corrupt.

The place which the death and resurrection of our Lord hold in the Gospel, the good news, is very strikingly pointed out by the apostle, when he says, "Who shall lay anything

[1] Isa. liii. 10. [2] Isa. liii. 9.

[3] It is humiliating to find a man like Lud. Capellus, in a note on Hosea vi. 2, saying, "Ita videmus quomodo Christus dicatur, a mortuis excitatus secundum Scripturas. 1 Cor. xv. 4."

to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." [1]

This death for our sins, according to the Scriptures, the reality of which is attested by his burial according to the Scriptures, and the efficacy of which is attested by his rising again on the third day, according to the Scriptures, was intended to be, and is indeed, available to deliverance from evil in all its forms, and in all its degrees. When it is declared that he "gave himself for us," that he "died for our sins," it is declared substantially "that in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins;" that we are redeemed from the present evil world; that as a peculiar people, we are brought back to God; that we are "delivered from the wrath to come." Was not the apostle, then, justified when he declared that the statement that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, and that he rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures, is "the Gospel," the glad tidings of great joy to all people. It is just equivalent to, God is propitiated —heaven is open to men. "God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ has died; therefore man need not die; therefore believing man shall not die. Our sins were all that was between us and God and happiness; and "our sins" are taken away; for he died for them.

This, then, is the Gospel, a declaration of the finished work of Christ, as the expiator of guilt. He, the incarnate God-man, the Divinely appointed Saviour, has died for sins; and the reality of that death has been proved by his burial, and the efficacy of it by his resurrection. This is the Gospel— no declaration of an amnesty without atonement, but of an

[1] Rom. viii. 33, 34.

all-perfect atonement made and accepted; no declaration of a mitigated law and easier terms of acceptance, but of a law magnified and made honourable, and a free and full forgiveness offered to all, through the infinite atonement. Here is a perfected Redeemer, a complete redemption;—nothing for us but, believing the good news, to trust *him* and enjoy *it*.

Now, what do we think of this Gospel?—are we saying in our hearts, with many a religious professor, 'to be sure this statement of the Gospel must be true, for it is the declaration of an inspired apostle, but—' But what? 'But is this all?' Yes, it is all; and it is enough; and those who do not see it to be divinely full and glorious, who find anything in this Gospel—*i. e.*, in the event the Gospel announces—lacking to vindicate the Divine honour, and to bring peace to the guiltiest of men, have their eyes yet holden, so that they do not discern its true meaning; they have not believed this divine report; they do not "know the truth as it is in Jesus." This Gospel opens no field for the exertion of the sinner's supposed ability, or worthiness, or wisdom—affords no room for self-congratulation to the well-disposed doer of the best he can, but merely publishes the salvation of God to those who have destroyed themselves, who are ungodly and without strength. It runs counter to all the natural religion of fallen man; and finding the sinner in utter ignorance of the true God, and in opposition to Him, displays a glorious union of holiness and grace which it had not entered into his heart to think of, but which, once seen, destroys enmity, and produces confidence in Him. It is not suited to those who regard themselves and may be regarded by others as the well-disposed and the worthy, but it brings the righteousness and salvation of God to the sinful, the evil, the guilty, the depraved, the utterly lost, in announcing that propitiation for sin which God himself provided in the gift of his own Son, which He has accepted as fully well-pleasing in his sight, and of which He has *proved* his acceptance by

raising him from the dead. Whenever a christian professor, either in the commencement of his course, or at any subsequent period in it, takes a complacent view of his own doings, as the ground of acceptance, and looks on himself as not ranking with publicans and sinners, with the utterly vile and evil, as a recipient of this salvation, his eye is closed to the revealed glory of Jehovah, and his sacrifices are an abomination to the Holy One of Israel.[1] There is no good news for man but "God is rich in mercy"—"Christ died, the just for the unjust"—"Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life,"—"no hope for man but here;" and here is hope, good hope, for the chief of sinners.[2]

[1] John Walker—"Seven Letters to a Friend." Works, vol. i., p. 358.

[2] "When I my wicked heart survey,
And course of life from day to day,
There's nought to meet my wretched view
But sin—and death, its proper due.

"But honour, praise, and glory rise
To Him who reigns above the skies;
To pardon guilt of deepest stains,
Unbounded mercy ever reigns—

"Jehovah's Fellow's wondrous grace!
Assumed our nature, took our place;
His blood upon the cross was shed,
And he was numbered with the dead;

"Sin's captives he redeemed from death,
When he for them resigned his breath,
Bearing the curse, the wrath divine,
That mercy might for ever shine.

"See from the dead the First-born come—
The Lord of life has burst the tomb.
To all the world from this bless'd hour,
Declar'd the Son of God with power.

"This is enough—'tis all we need;
The Lord of life is risen indeed;—
The vilest wretch that breathes the air
Has now no reason to despair.

"Oh, may our joy and boasting be
For him that died upon the tree;
Still may the work he finished there
Preserve from doubts and dark despair."—*Glassite Hymn.*

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

We proclaim, then, to every sinner, these "glad tidings of great joy,"—In the faith of this truth 'the great sacrifice has been offered and accepted,' and, sprinkled by its blood, draw near to God. Him that thus comes to him he will in nowise cast out. This is the way, the only way, to the Father — the way to forgiveness — the way to peace—the way to holiness—the way to heaven. It deeply concerns us to be thus reconciled to God through the blood of his Son—to see that we do not receive this grace of God in vain. And, since Christ has died *for* our sins, let us think how sad if, through obstinate unbelief, we should yet die *in* our sins. Rather, when a free Gospel is preached, let us gladly believe it; when a finished redemption is offered, let us gladly accept it; and, with adoring grateful wonder, utter a song,—

"And is salvation brought so near
Where guilty men expiring lie?
Triumph, my soul, the sound to hear,
And shout it joyous to the sky.

"I ask not who to heaven shall scale,
That Christ the Saviour thence may come;
Or who earth's inmost depths assail
To bring the Saviour from the tomb.

"From heaven, on wings of love, he flew,
And conqu'ror from the tomb he sprung:
My heart believes the record true,
And dictates to my faithful tongue.

"I sing salvation, thus brought near,
No more on earth expiring lie;
I teach the world my joys to hear,
And shout them to the echoing sky."

"Blessed are the people who know this joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance; in thy name they shall rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

How are they to be pitied who never heard this Gospel! How can *we*, who have the Gospel—who know it, who

believe it—*but* pity them, and, if we pity them, how can we but help them!

> "Shall we, whose souls are lighted
> With wisdom from on high,
> Shall we, to men benighted,
> The lamp of life deny?
> Salvation! oh, salvation!
> The joyful sound proclaim,
> Till each remotest nation
> Has learned Messiah's name."[1]

And are they less to be pitied—while they are much more to be blamed—who have often heard, but never believed—never even seriously attended to this Gospel? What a double perdition awaits them, continuing in unbelief! O that they were wise—O that they would consider—ere it be too late! "Now is the accepted time—now is the day of salvation."

How fearful the guilt of professed christian ministers who conceal or who corrupt this "Gospel of our salvation,"—who, by putting anything in the room or alongside of Christ's finished work as the ground of the sinner's hope,—who, by making anything necessary to a personal interest in that finished work but the faith of the truth respecting it, lead the sinner away from the Saviour, or throw obstacles in the way of their getting to him,—building up a wall of adamant high as the heavens, while in the Scriptures there is an open door, that no man can shut! Oh, for a clear, simple, full, affectionate, exhibition of the Gospel of the grace of God throughout the church, throughout the world! That is the Spirit's chosen instrument for creating men anew. He "bears testimony to the word of God's grace." He will bear testimony to nothing else as "the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth it." God bless all honest enlightened preachers of the apostolic Gospel; increase their numbers, their zeal, their success.

It is the doctrine that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,—what the apostle calls "Christ cruci-

[1] Heber.

fied,"—that is to transform and save the world. Let all christian teachers, then, determine, with the apostle, "to know nothing," as the grand theme of their ministry, "but Christ and him crucified;" and, unmisled by the cry for a dispensation of doctrine suited to an enlightened, philosophical, inquiring age, let them, like the same apostle, who, when the Jews were desiring a sign, and the Greeks seeking after wisdom, went forth proclaiming, to both Jews and Greeks, Christ crucified,—a stumbling-block to the one, foolishness to the other, while in unbelief; but the power of God—the wisdom of God—to both when brought to believe. But let them take good heed that they themselves know what they profess to teach. It is a fearful thing to preach an ununderstood, a misunderstood, an unbelieved, Gospel. Happy are those christian teachers who can, in the spirit of faith, say, "we believe, and therefore speak!"

The Gospel, spoken by such men, is, we are persuaded, never altogether ineffectual. It is God's own ordinance, administered in God's own appointed way, and He will bless it. What a comfort to faithful ministers of the apostolical Gospel, who may be seeing but little fruit of their labours, is that ancient oracle,—"As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." [1]

[1] Isa. lv. 10, 11.

§ 2. *The right way of preaching the Gospel.*

In discussing the right mode of preaching the Gospel, it is not my intention to treat it in a systematic, abstract, general way, but, by delineating the leading features in the Apostle Paul's manner of preaching the Gospel,[1] as these are presented to us in the passage under consideration, to exhibit a picture of the manner in which the Gospel ought always to be preached. By looking attentively at the text, we perceive that the essence of preaching the Gospel consists in a statement of the truth respecting the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, and of its evidence; that, in this statement of truth and evidence respecting the way of salvation through Christ, there should be a constant and direct reference to the volume of divine revelation as the grand storehouse of both; that this statement of scriptural truth and evidence respecting the way of salvation through Christ, ought to be orderly; that this scriptural and orderly statement of truth and evidence respecting the way of salvation through Christ ought to be simple and perspicuous; and, finally, that this scriptural, orderly, perspicuous, statement of truth and evidence respecting the way of salvation through Christ ought to be often repeated. These principles are, all of them, clearly deducible from the words of the text, and, taken together, they constitute a very comprehensive view of the right way of preaching the Gospel. Let us briefly attend to them in their order.

(1.) *The truth and its evidence must be stated.*

In the first place, then, I observe that the essence of preaching the Gospel consists in a statement of truth and evidence respecting the way of salvation through Christ. So it is in the specimen of apostolical Gospel preaching

[1] τίνι λόγῳ εὐηγγελισάμην.

which lies before us. The apostle states the truth—"Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again,"—truth which, when rightly understood, contains in it, as I have showed in the previous section, the whole "Gospel of the grace of God;" and he not only states the truth, but he appeals to the evidence on which it rests; first, Old Testament prophecy—he died, he was buried, he rose again, "according to the Scriptures;" then miracles—the resurrection; the reality of which he shows to have been established by the most satisfactory proofs. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." "So"—in this way—Paul and his apostolic brethren preached.

When we consider what the nature of the Gospel is—that it is not a system of abstract principles, not a creation of the human mind, neither an invention of human ingenuity, nor a discovery by human sagacity—but a revelation, a report, a testimony, respecting things which "eye had not seen, nor ear heard, and which it never could have entered into the heart of man to conceive,"—by one who cannot be deceived, and who cannot deceive,—a testimony to be credited entirely on the authority of the Divine witness; and, when we reflect what is the design of the preaching of the Gospel—that it may be believed—it must be obvious that the right preaching of such a revelation must substantially consist in a clear statement, first, of the testimony itself, and, secondly, of the evidence that it is indeed what it claims to be—the testimony of God. If men are to be brought to believe, it is obviously requisite, from the nature of the mental constitution God has given them, that they should be told *what* they are to believe, and *why* they are to believe it.

The fundamental part, then, of Gospel-preaching is the statement of the facts respecting the way of salvation through Christ Jesus,—'that Jesus Christ, an incarnation of the divinity, came into our world, bearing the responsibilities of our fallen race, and, by his entire conformity to the preceptive part of the law to which man is subject—and by his endurance of the evils in which God's displeasure at man's violation of this law is expressed—has so changed the relations of fallen man to the moral government of God, as that a full, free, and everlasting pardon and salvation are, in a well-accredited revelation, presented to all men; and as that whosoever believeth on this divine incarnate Saviour—"delivered for our offences—raised again for our justification"—shall be "justified freely through the redemption that is in him"—shall be "washed and sanctified in his name by his Spirit"—shall "not perish, but have everlasting life."' The statement of these facts is the preaching of the Gospel. This is the Gospel—"the glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

These facts, in their true meaning, must be brought distinctly before the mind. Many christian ministers in this country seem, from their practice, to think that, in the state of enlightenment which is supposed to prevail among us, such statements are, in a great measure, unnecessary. They seem to think that these facts are so generally known, and so well understood, that all that is requisite in our circumstances is, taking for granted a familiar acquaintance with the alleged facts, to proceed to state the evidence on which they rest; their importance—if they be indeed, as they demonstrably are, true; and to point out the practical results, in a change of character and conduct, which, if believed, they certainly will produce. But this is a dangerous mistake. We must not take for granted that the foundation, even on the distinct knowledge of the facts, is so extensively laid. There is, in this self-called christian country, in quarters little suspected, an amount of downright ignorance

on these subjects, which nothing but an acquaintance with the fact could make credible; and, even where there is not absolute ignorance, there is often extreme confusion and misapprehension. The words in which the facts of the Gospel are expressed are often to be found in the memory—where no corresponding apprehension of their meaning is to be found in the understanding,—and, of course, no corresponding impression can exist in the conscience or in the heart. Till the meaning of the divine testimony is apprehended, nothing is done—nothing can be done. Clear statement of the facts should, then, hold a prominent place in every Gospel-sermon: and I confess that I am sometimes tempted to think, that *one* reason why what are meant to be—what, in some respects, are—Gospel-sermons produce, in our age, so little effect in comparison of what the sermons of the apostles and other primitive preachers of the Gospel did, is to be found in the fact that they, in many cases, consist rather in ingenious speculations about the Gospel, than in plain statements of the Gospel itself; and I cannot but deprecate, as dishonouring to the divine Author of the Gospel —God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—and deeply hazardous to the highest interests of the race, the substituting what is termed the philosophy of the Gospel, which is the fruit of man's speculation, in the room of the facts of the Gospel, which were God's work, and of their inspired statement, which is God's testimony, with the intention, it may be, of mitigating the prejudices of a blinded world, which thinks itself wise, against what has always appeared, and will always appear, to them "foolishness," till their eyes are opened, and then it will appear to them that it is "the wisdom of God," what they accounted the foolishness of God, proving itself, to their full conviction, wiser than man's wisdom.

But bare statement of the testimony, however clear, does not complete the idea of gospel-preaching: there must be a statement, too, of the evidence. It must be shown that the testimony is what it claims to be—a true testimony, a Divine

testimony. God requires us to believe the Gospel, *i. e.*, to reckon it true. I cannot reckon anything true, I cannot feel it to be a reality, by merely willing to do so. God has so made us, that we cannot believe rationally without evidence, or against evidence; and He acts in his revelation as one who knows our frame. He does not require us to believe even himself against evidence or without evidence. *He* never denies himself; He is always self-consistent. When we believe the Gospel, we do not believe it because its elementary principles have been demonstrated to our reason. It is highly probable that, were our minds sufficiently powerful and sufficiently well-informed, such a demonstration might be quite a possible thing. But it is not in this way that God makes the Gospel the subject of a reasonable faith to man. We believe the Gospel because it is a revelation from God, who, we know as certainly as we can know anything, cannot be deceived, and cannot deceive; and we believe that the Gospel is a Divine revelation, because it has appropriate and satisfactory evidence of being so. That evidence is of very various kinds: Evidence from its exact correspondence with the predictions of the Old Testament Scriptures; evidence from numerous, various, well-attested miracles—the *seal* which God impresses on his own communications; evidence from internal marks of truth and divinity; evidence from the effects which it is calculated to produce, and which it has actually produced, on the character, and conduct, and circumstances of mankind. Now, it is the duty of the preacher of the Gospel to make himself most familiarly intimate with this evidence in all its forms, and to bring it before his audience in the manner which he has reason to think will find the readiest entrance into, and make the deepest impression on, their minds.

Some very good men estimate but lightly the value of such a statement of evidence as we have described. They scarcely reckon it a part of gospel-preaching at all. Nay, some of them are not backward to affirm that it does more

harm than good, suggesting doubts where none previously existed. Surely these good men would not have us believe even the Gospel without a reason for believing it; and if it be true, it is certainly not the less likely to be believed if it be proved to be so,—nor is he least likely to hold it fast, and exhibit its holy influence, who is always ready to give, to every one who asks it of him, a reason of his faith.

It is not, indeed, wonderful that, in the minds of some good men, prejudices against statements of the evidence of christian truth should have arisen, from the manner in which this subject has often been handled by men, who, in treating it, obviously sought nothing farther than the means of exercising and displaying their own intellectual faculties, and who gave but too good proof that, while dexterous at managing an argument against an infidel, they were entire strangers to the true meaning and sanctifying influence of the system they professed to defend. But the abuse of a thing is a poor argument against its use; and, to a man who car think at all, it must appear impossible that men should be brought to believe, in any proper sense of the term, without such a statement of evidence; unless it be insisted that men may and ought to believe implicitly on the authority of the preacher, or that, by some, not merely supernatural, but absolutely miraculous and unaccountable influence, faith is to be created in the mind.

One thing is very obvious, that in all the apostolical specimens of preaching the Gospel—and they are numerous—the statement of evidence occupies a prominent place. Their hearers are never left in the dark as to *why* they were to believe, any more than as to *what* they were to believe.

In the specimen of gospel-preaching in the passage before us, the evidence on which the statement rests is clearly stated. The resurrection of our Lord, as a fact, was strong evidence of the doctrine that "he had died for our sins,"—the cardinal principle of the Gospel, both as it marked him out as God's Holy One who was not to see corruption,—

as him who, having been smitten to death for the transgression of his people, and had his grave appointed him with the wicked, and being with the rich in the state of the dead, should yet see his seed, and prolong his days,—and as it was the seal of God to the truth of all his doctrines, one of which was, that "the Son of Man came to give himself a ransom for many." But then the resurrection itself required to be attested; and the apostle turns the attention of the Corinthians to a variety of facts which satisfactorily prove it. "He was seen of Cephas," *i. e.*, Peter. The details of this appearance are not recorded; but it took place on the day of the resurrection, and is referred to in the Gospel by Luke.[1] "Then he was seen of the twelve." There were only eleven apostles at the time referred to, and likely only ten present at our Lord's first meeting with them, Thomas being absent; but "the twelve"[2] seems a word denoting the apostles as a body, just as the Roman magistrates called "the Decemviri" would receive that name though they were not all together, or even though one or more of the ten places in their college might be vacant.[3] To the apostles our Lord appeared a number of times, "showing himself alive by many infallible proofs."[4] "After that he was seen of above[5] five hundred brethren at once;[6]

[1] Luke xxiv. 34. [2] οἱ δώδεκα.

[3] It is not necessary to suppose Matthias present, for that would not mend the matter. The reading οἱ ἕνδεκα, given in some codd., is plainly a bungling attempt to get rid of an apparent difficulty. δώδεκα is here used much in the same way as δωδεκάφυλον is, Acts xxvi. 7.

[4] Mark xvi. 14. Luke xxiv. 36. John xx. 19, 24. Acts i. 3; x. 41.

[5] ἐπάνω for πλεῖον, Mark xiv. 5. The construction is peculiar, like the Latin *plus trecentos*. It is not here an adverb of place; though, as Theophylact says, "τὸ δὲ ἐπάνω, τινὲς μέν τὸ ἄνωθεν, ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν φασιν."

[6] Beza, noticing that the number of the disciples who assembled after the ascension was but one hundred and twenty, Acts i. 15, has conjectured that πεντήκοντα should be read instead of πεντακοσίοις, *i. e.*, that ν′ was the original writing, not φ′, and apologises for his boldness in bringing forward such a conjecture by saying, that it is merely the change of a letter. But there is no similarity between ν and φ. Valcknaer justly remarks, "Potuerunt esse Hierosolymis tantum 120 fratres. Sed cur non in Galilæa multo potuerunt plures? In Galilæam venit Christus e mortuis excitatus, atque isthic videntur fuisse isti 500 hic memorati."

of whom the greater part remain[1] unto this present, but some have fallen asleep." It is doubtful whether this refers to the appearance on a mountain in Galilee, mentioned Matt. xxviii. 16, or to some other appearance not referred to by the evangelists. "After that he was seen of James." It is probable that this is James "the brother," *i. e.*, the near relation, "of our Lord." There is a particular account of such an appearance, in one of the apocryphal gospels. "Then of all the apostles."[2] There can be no doubt this refers to his last appearance at the time of his ascension.[3] "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." There is great diversity of opinion as to the import of the word[4] rendered "one born out of due time." I am disposed to agree with those[5] who think it means here 'a last-born child,' the youngest of the family, and born long after the rest. Such children are often smaller and weaker than the rest. The apostle refers, no doubt, to our Lord's appearing to him in the way to Damascus;[6] and possibly, also, to his appearing to him in the temple.[7] The mention of this circumstance leads the apostle, with characteristic humility, to add, "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." But though in his own estimation, viewed in himself, the least of the apostles, yet, by the grace —the free favour—of God, which he takes every opportunity of magnifying, he had been more laboriously active in the cause of Christ than any of his apostolic brethren. "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which

[1] *μένουσι* scil. *ἐν βίῳ* vel (ut Plutarch, de Stoic. repug.) *ἐν τῷ ζῆν*, superstites sunt —vivunt adhuc. *Ἀναλῦσαι* is opposed to *ἐπιμένειν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ*, Phil. i. 23, 24.

[2] "*Ἦσαν γὰρ καὶ ἄλλοι ἀπόστολοι, ὡς οἱ ἑβδομήκοντα.*"—CHRYSOSTOM. Venema conjectures that *πάλιν* should be read instead of *πᾶσιν*, and Valcknaer terms this "egregia emendatio;" but in the criticism of the New Testament conjectural emendation should be entirely avoided. It is otherwise with the Old Testament. There, there are some cases where conjectural emendations without doubt give the original reading.

[3] Luke xxiv. 50. Mark xvi. 19. Acts i. 4-9.

[4] *ἔκτρωμα*.

[5] Heydenreich.

[6] Acts ix. 3-8; xxvi. 16.

[7] Acts xxii. 17.

was bestowed on me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." So careful is the apostle to state the evidence of the gospel-message, both in the proof which the resurrection of our Lord gives of the doctrine of his atoning death, and in the abundant evidence that that resurrection, on which so much rested, was a fact most satisfactorily established.[1]

I am deeply persuaded that a want of a right and sufficient statement of evidence is *another* cause why gospel-sermons, substantially deserving the name, are not so useful as might be wished or expected. There is still but too much reason to complain, with Richard Baxter, that too many professed Christians are little better than implicit believers. "They have received it by tradition; they believe it because godly ministers and Christians tell them it is so, and that it is impious to doubt it;" and to conclude, with him, that this unsoundness and infirmity with regard to the evidence of Christianity is "a great cause of coldness in duty, weakness in grace, boldness in sinning, and unwillingness to die." These words of his are full of wisdom:—"Though we could persuade people ever so confidently to believe that the Gospel is the very Word of God, and yet teach them no other reason why they should believe *it*, rather than any other book, to be that Word, as it will prove in them no right way of believing, so it is in us no right way of teaching."

The meaning of the testimony must be made plain, that it may be understood; the evidence of the testimony must be made plain, that it may be believed. Not as if any statement of the truth and its evidence, however clear, will be effectual to the belief of saving truth, without the accompanying influence of the Holy Ghost; but it is by the exhibition of the truth, in its meaning and evidence, that men

[1] The evidence of the resurrection is more fully exhibited in the Discourse appended to this Exposition.

are brought, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, to believe it.

The statement of the truth, and of its evidence, must be closely connected with each other in preaching the Gospel; for the knowledge of both is necessary to a reasonable influential faith. A simple statement of the doctrines of the New Testament may make a man acquainted with what Christianity is, just as a statement of what is contained in the Koran may make a man acquainted with what Mohammedanism is; but there must be an exhibition of evidence in order to his becoming a believer. On the other hand, a bare statement of evidence may convince a man that Christianity is a divine religion; but he must know what Christianity is before he can have that faith in its principles by which a man is justified and sanctified, comforted and saved. Bare statements of truth, without evidence, have a tendency to make men speculatists, or, at best, but implicit believers; and bare statements of evidence have a tendency to lead men to mistake a mere intellectual exercise for saving faith, —to make men rest in a general persuasion that Christianity is divine, while ignorant or misinformed respecting those truths, the knowledge and belief of which are at once necessary and sufficient to make men truly wise, good, and happy. It is the union of the statement of christian truth with the statement of its evidence which constitutes good gospel-preaching,—that preaching which, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is "able to make men wise unto salvation."

(2.) *In this statement there must be a constant reference to the Holy Scriptures.*

I go on to observe, in the second place, that in this statement of the truth respecting the way of salvation through Christ Jesus, and its evidences, there ought to be a constant reference to the volume of inspired Scripture, which is the great storehouse both of the truth and its evidence. Our Lord, in his conflict with the wicked one, prefaced every

one of his replies with "It is written." In his discourses, he often referred to "the law and the prophets." The apostle here, in preaching the Gospel, keeps steadily before the mind of his readers the Divine revelation, whether made to himself, or to the "holy men of old," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." "I declared unto you," says he, "*that which I have received.*" "I declared unto you that Christ died for our sins *according to the Scriptures;* and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day *according to the Scriptures.*"[1]

The Holy Scriptures, "given by inspiration of God," contain in them everything that is necessary to "make the man of God perfect," and to "thoroughly furnish" him for the work of preaching the Gospel. It is from them he is to draw the materials of all his discourses; and it is to them that he is constantly to draw the attention of his hearers, as containing the only infallible account both of truth and its evidence,—both *what* they are to believe, and *why* they are to believe it. The Gospel he preaches is not a cunningly devised fable; it is not a curiously constructed theory; it is not a humanly composed narrative: it is the testimony of God concerning his Son; and therefore, in stating it, the preacher must neither indulge the flights of his own imagination, nor bring forward the speculations of his own reason, nor retail the fancies and opinions of other men. He must deliver what he has received, without extenuation, without exaggeration, without alteration,—and show that every statement, whether as to truth or evidence, is "according to the Scriptures."

It is not enough that the doctrine taught be substantially scriptural. This may be—this often has been—the case, where the Scriptures as the only authority are very much

[1] Krausé and some other interpreters refer τὰς γραφὰς to written accounts of our Lord's life, such as the four gospels, and the writings referred to by Luke in his preface to his gospel; but in Paul's writings ἡ γραφὴ, and αἱ γραφαὶ, are always descriptive of the Old Testament Scriptures, and generally of the prophetic part of these Scriptures.

kept out of view; and where *the church*, in some of the many senses of that much-abused word, is put in their place,—where *man*, not *God*, is recognised as lord of our faith. Not merely must the doctrine be scriptural, but the preacher must *show* that it is scriptural, and that he claims the belief of his audience for it *because* it is scriptural. There may be cases in which it may serve a good purpose for a minister to show that the statements he makes are not inconsistent with the sentiments of good and wise men, worthily held in honour in the churches, especially where these sentiments have been embodied in what are termed Creeds or Confessions of Faith. The weakness of good men—the designs of bad men—may make this occasionally desirable, or even necessary; but human and divine authority are never for a moment to be confounded, or set on the same level. The ultimate appeal must always be made to the Bible; and the Bible, the Bible alone, must be brought forward as authority. That the Gospel may be to any man "the power of God unto salvation," it must be seen and felt to be indeed "not the word of man," or of men, "but of the living God." What is substantially Divine truth, if not received on Divine authority, will not be productive of its peculiar efficacy. And how can it be received on Divine authority, if not delivered just as a message with which the preacher has been put in trust by God,—if not distinctly shown to be according to those "Scriptures which are given by inspiration of God," and, being so, "are profitable for doctrine, and for reproof, and for correction, and for instruction in righteousness"?[1]

(3.) *This statement must be orderly.*

I proceed to observe, in the third place, that in preaching the Gospel the scriptural statement of christian truth and its evidence must be orderly. "I delivered unto you," says

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 16

the apostle, "first of all[1] that which I also received."[2] It must be *systematic*, in the true sense of the term.

A controversy has been agitated respecting the advantages and disadvantages of a systematic mode of teaching Christianity, or preaching the Gospel. Like most controversies, this has been greatly perplexed by the ambiguity of language. The right resolution of the question depends very much on our attaching distinct ideas to the terms employed in its statement. The importance of humanly devised systematic views of christian truth easily may be, and often has been, greatly overrated, while their inconveniences and dangers have been too much overlooked and forgotten. Such systematic views of the Gospel as are to be met in our Confessions of Faith or Bodies of Divinity, may be considered as intended either for the purpose of arrangement or of explanation,—as affording either merely a classification, or, in addition to this, giving also a theory of Christianity. In works of the first kind there is comparatively little danger; but works of the second kind, though they may be turned to considerable advantage, require to be read with constant caution. Had the author of any of these systems been an inspired man, it would not only have been safe, but obligatory, to give ourselves up to his guidance,—to have equally received the form and the matter of his system,—to have confidence in his theory as the true *rationale* of the facts contained in the Gospel,—to have regarded his arrangements and phraseology as the best possible,—and to have bowed to his decisions with equal submission as to the declaration o

[1] ἐν πρώτοις is referred by Chrysostom to the time "from the first," ἀπαρχῆς οὐ νῦν, but he adds καὶ οὐ τοῦτο μόνον, ἀλλὰ ὅτι καὶ ἀναγκαῖον τὸ δόγμα: "and not only so, but also because the dogma is necessary."—Quoted by Billroth. Theophylact says—"Ἐν πρώτοις· οἱονεὶ γὰρ θεμελιός ἐστι πάσης τῆς πίστεως." The πρῶτα the apostle refers to, are, as Olshausen well remarks, the θεμέλια and στοιχεῖα mentioned Heb. vi. 1. Grotius renders the phrase, "Inter præcipua quæ credere debebatis."

[2] Not, as Grotius says, from Ananias, or the other apostles, but, as Paul himself says, "he neither received it of man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ," Gal. i. 11, 12. "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you," 1 Cor. xi. 23.

the prophets and the apostles. Divine revelation, in its miscellaneous form in the Bible, and in its systematic form in the Body of Divinity or Confession of Faith, would in this case have been of co-ordinate authority. They would have had equal claims, or, if there were any difference, the superiority would seem to belong to the latter. On any apparent discrepancy, the Bible would come to be explained by the system, rather than the system by the Bible. On the hypothesis of an inspired Body of Divinity or Confession of Faith, all this would be perfectly right; but as no such work exists, anything like this must be altogether wrong. Human systems can never be useful in any other way than as subsidiary to the right understanding of the Bible. They must never be allowed to occupy its place; and, in studying them, we should constantly be on our guard against taking up with words instead of things, and mistaking human opinions for Divine verities.[1]

There is, however, a divine system in the Bible, without in some measure apprehending the great outlines of which, we cannot rightly state the truth as it is in Jesus. The various parts of the restorative dispensation are closely connected. The incarnation and the atonement, justification and sanctification, deliverance from guilt and renovation of character, are all parts of one great, harmonious scheme of salvation; and in the same manner, the doctrines of the Gospel are not like the inspired maxims of Solomon—very valuable, but altogether unconnected; they are component parts of one great system; they are all closely connected and mutually dependent. No one part of the scheme of restoration, no one doctrine of the Gospel, can be properly understood without tracing its connections and dependencies, and ascertaining its place in, and its bearing on, the stupendous fabric. The study of this species of systematic theology is the proper employment of the disciples on the

[1] These views will be found more fully developed in the Introductory Essay to M'Laurin's Works, and in "Hints to Students."

higher forms in the school of Christ; and no man will be a good preacher of the Gospel who is not a proficient in it.

Without an orderly exhibition of christian doctrine, the truths of the Gospel can be but imperfectly understood. A great part of the wisdom of a christian preacher consists in giving the due degree of comparative prominence, in his ministrations, to the various articles of the christian faith; and the best way of securing this is to endeavour as far as possible to give them the same place in our sermons that they occupy in the inspired oracles. Whosoever does this will give the very foremost place to the doctrine of the vicarious and expiatory death of Jesus Christ. Whatever may come in the second, or the third, or any following place, when preaching the Gospel, he will, like the apostle, "declare *first of all* that which also he has received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures."

(4.) *This statement must be simple and perspicuous.*

I proceed to remark, in the fourth place, that, in preaching the Gospel, the Scriptural, orderly statement of christian doctrine and evidence must be simple and perspicuous. Nothing can be more simple, nothing more perspicuous, than the manner in which the apostle here states the Gospel; and this was but a fair specimen of his ordinary manner of preaching the Gospel. "When I came to you," says he to the Corinthians, "I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." "Christ sent me to preach the Gospel: not with wisdom of words. My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom." "We use great plainness of speech."[1] When ministers consider the awful importance of the message they bring, and that the everlasting weal or

[1] 1 Cor. i. 17; ii. 1-4. 2 Cor. iii. 12.

woe of their hearers depends on the reception they give to it, and that the weakest and most ignorant of their hearers are equally interested in it as the most intelligent of them, (and how large a proportion does the former, in most congregations, bear to the latter!) it surely must be evident that they should studiously copy the apostle's example in using "great plainness of speech." It is not at all necessary, it is not at all proper, that they should be mean or vulgar in their style, but it is both proper and necessary that they should be familiar and perspicuous. The language of abstract metaphysical speculation, and of the higher poetry, is equally out of place in the christian pulpit. It has been strikingly said, "To preach to show the extent of our reading, the depth of our philosophy, the subtilty of our wit, or the power of our fancy — to blazon these in the eyes of our hearers, with the beggarly account of a few learned or fine words, which glitter, but convey little light and less heat, is a dishonest use of the hours appropriated to christian instruction; it is not to preach the Gospel, but ourselves."

There are, however, two kinds of preaching which often, both with preachers and hearers, pass under the designations "plain" and "simple," which deserve to be otherwise characterised. I refer to what may be termed the technical and the figurative modes of preaching.

There is a technical, artificial, theological language, the language neither of common life nor of the Bible, but that of Catechisms, Confessions of Faith, and Bodies of Divinity, to which many of us have been accustomed from our infancy; and if a minister, in preaching, carefully adhere to this phraseology, he generally passes for a plain preacher. He uses words and phrases which are familiar to the ear; and we too readily conclude that he conveys clear and important truths to the mind. In many cases, however, instead of helping us to think, he but furnishes us an apology for not thinking. In such instances, little or no truth is conveyed

to the mind; and the hearer might easily convince himself of this, if he were but disposed, by a very simple experiment. Let him try if he can express in other words what he has heard from the preacher, and thinks he well understands, and he will probably find that the information he has got is neither so extensive nor so distinct as he had supposed.

Preaching in a continued figure is also not unfrequently considered as plain, simple preaching. The judicious use of figures greatly contributes to the illustration of abstract truth. The great Teacher often employed them; he who spake as never man spake, often spake in parables. But those wire-drawn illustrations of scriptural figures, which delight many minds, generally serve any purpose rather than making truth more plain. The imagination is so occupied with the sign that the understanding loses the distinct apprehension of the thing signified.

That only deserves the name of plain preaching which enables a man to perceive clearly the meaning and evidence of christian truth. Such a mode of preaching is not easy preaching to the minister, who finds it requires all his learning and all his reflection to make the deep things of God simple and clear, either to himself or to his hearers; and it is a mode of preaching which will be found to require some mental exertion on the part of him who listens as well as of him who speaks—on the part of him who receives instruction as well as of him who imparts it. That minister is a fit object of pity and contempt who, in order to gain for himself the reputation of a learned divine, wraps up saving truth in metaphysical disquisition or scholastic phraseology; but he is not less so who, to secure the popularity that is connected with the character of a plain preacher, is willing to follow a course which, while it saves him much mental exertion, flatters the prejudices of his people, to the extreme hazard of their souls, and, by ringing changes on terms familiar to their ears, but conveying no distinct ideas to their minds, gives new force to the delusion

already too strong, that they are intelligent Christians, while indeed they know not anything as they ought, and, though for the time they might have been teachers of others, need some one to convince them of their ignorance, and teach them what be the first principles of the oracles of God.

(5.) *This statement must be frequently repeated.*

I have only farther to add, that, in preaching the Gospel, this scriptural, orderly, clear exhibition of christian truth and evidence must be frequently repeated.[1] Paul, in declaring this Gospel to the Corinthians, repeats what he had again, and again, and again said to them; and every christian minister who would preach the Gospel aright, must in this respect imitate his example. "Precept must be upon precept, line upon line."[2] There is a strong predilection for novelty in the human mind; and I am afraid christian ministers often sacrifice very important interests in seeking to gratify this natural disposition both in themselves and in their hearers. It is very right to study variety, so far as it can be attained without withdrawing the mind from the great cardinal points of christian doctrine and law. But it ought ever to be remembered that men are to be converted, and justified, and sanctified, and comforted, and saved, not by ingenious, well-composed disquisitions, having some connection, sometimes but a remote one, with any of the great principles of christian faith and duty, but by the clear statement of the truth as it is in Jesus—truth so opposed to the likings of the natural mind, that it needs to be constantly pressed on the attention, and which the partially-renewed mind is but too apt to let slip. There is something far wrong with the preacher who is ashamed to present the spiritual manna, the pure milk of the word, again, and again, and again in its uncorrupted simplicity, and with the hearers when they loathe the manna, and desire not the sincere milk. A taste for a

[1] "γνωρίζω, τουτέστιν ἐπαναμιμνήσκω."—THEOPHYLACT, ŒCUMENIUS.
[2] Isa. xxviii. 10. 1 Cor. xv.

constant succession of high-seasoned, artificial dishes, is not a proof of sound health; and the spiritual physician consults his patient's highest interests by refusing to minister to any such appetite. Let the mode of exhibition be varied as much as may be, if it be nowise varied so as to interfere with higher objects; but let it never be lost sight of, that it is "the truth as it is in Jesus," understood and believed, that converts the sinner and edifies the saint—that "by these things men live, and that in them is the life of our souls."

In no department of knowledge can men become proficients but by having substantially the same statements often repeated to them; and it were strange if that department of knowledge to which, of all others, there is the strongest natural disinclination, should be an exception. For the christian minister "to speak the same things to his people, to him ought not to be grievous, because for them it is safe." Indeed, to act otherwise would be the very reverse of safe, however pleasant it might be both to him and to them.

So much for the illustration of the right way of preaching the Gospel, as exemplified by the apostle in the passage before us. In preaching the Gospel, there ought to be a scriptural, orderly, clear, frequently-repeated statement of the truth respecting the way of salvation through Christ Jesus.

§ 3. *The duty of those to whom the Gospel is rightly preached.*

The duty of those to whom the Gospel is rightly preached is to treat the Gospel in the manner in which, according to the apostle, the believing Corinthians had treated it, and in which it was necessary they should continue to treat it, if they would be saved by it. They had received it;[1] they *stood* in it—*i. e.* they continued in the belief, profession, and obedience

[1] "παρελάβετε, præteritum; ἑστήκατε præsens in sensu; σώζεσθε futurum in sensu."—BENGEL.

of it; and they must "keep it in memory," or, as the word may with at least equal propriety be rendered, "they must "hold it fast;" their continuance must be permanent; they must not "dure" only "for a while;" they must persevere in the faith, profession, and obedience of the Gospel to the end. The whole of the duty of those to whom the Gospel is preached, may be comprehended under the two heads of *receiving* it and *retaining* it; letting it in, not putting it out; not letting it slip out or be expelled, but keeping it in; taking hold of it, and keeping hold of it. Let us turn our attention to these in their order.

(1.) *To receive it.*

In the first place, then, they to whom the Gospel is preached ought to "receive" it.[1] It is common to consider "receiving the Gospel," and "believing the Gospel," as precisely equivalent expressions. This is not, however, accurate interpretation. The reception of the Gospel is a phrase of much more comprehensive meaning than the faith of the Gospel. It includes the faith of the Gospel; but it includes much more. It includes the state of mind which leads to the faith of the Gospel, and it includes the state of mind, too, to which the faith of the Gospel leads. There is a reception of the Gospel into the mind as a subject of considerate thought, without which faith cannot exist; and there is a reception of the Gospel into the heart, as the object of love, the foundation of hope, the source of holiness and joy, that cannot exist without faith. To receive the Gospel includes both these, as well as the faith which is the result of the former, and the cause of the latter. The reception of the Gospel describes the whole state of the mind and heart, the whole movement or action of the intellect,

[1] "παρελάβετε denotes the fact of perceiving (literally—mingled with), corresponding to the παραδιδόναι—εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, verse 3; Gal. i. 19; Phil. iv. 9; and often, according to the common explanation, it denotes the believing reception, John i. 11."—De Wette.

the will, and the affections, with which the gospel-testimony, when presented to the mind and heart, should be met—a state of mind equally opposed to inconsiderate neglect of the Gospel, infidel rejection of the Gospel, fruitless speculation about the Gospel, and antinomian abuse of the Gospel.

The duty referred to seems naturally to resolve itself into four parts or consecutive stages: considerate attention; firm faith; cordial—*i. e.*, joyful, grateful—acquiescence; and humble practical submission. In the first, the Gospel is admitted within the mind so far as to be made a subject of serious examination; in the second, it is allowed to take possession of the central chamber; and, in the third and fourth, it is permitted, according to its will, to range over and dwell in every part of the "spiritual house," as its own property and home, expelling the foul train of false opinions and depraved inclinations, which had obtained an usurped possession—transforming it, from a den of darkness and pollution, into "a habitation of God, through the Spirit"—the abode of holy light, and love, and purity. Let us look at the receiving of the Gospel in these four aspects.

I observe, then, in the first place, that, to receive the Gospel, we must considerately attend to it. This is the fundamental part of the reception of the Gospel. Till we carefully attend to the Gospel, it is entirely without us; and, if we continue in a state of careless inattention, it never can be within us. In one of our Lord's parables we read that, when a certain king sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the marriage-feast of his son, and, to induce their speedy compliance with the call, to inform them that the preparations for the feast were completed, and that "all things were ready," the greater part of them scarcely gave the servants a patient hearing, but "made light" of the invitation, and "went their way, one to his farm, and the other to his merchandise."[1] They did not

[1] Matt. xxii. 1-5.

allow themselves time to reflect on the honour done them by the invitation—on the privilege offered to them—on the authority and on the kindness of the inviter—on the advantages which were likely to result from accepting the invitation, and on the hazards which would be incurred by rejecting it,—but, absorbed by their little selfish pursuits, they treated their sovereign's invitation as unworthy even of being made a subject of deliberate thought. This is no exaggerated picture of the way in which the gospel revelation has been treated by a large proportion of those, in every country, to whom, in succeeding ages, "this word of salvation" has been sent. They make light of it; they do not deign to bestow on it that measure of attention that is necessary to understand its import. They never so far consider the matter as to come to anything like a settled determination, on assignable grounds, respecting its truth or its falsity. It may be true, or it may be false, for anything they know; but they care not whether it be true or false.

This seems to have been the case of the great body of our Lord's Jewish contemporaries, who enjoyed his personal ministry. When our Lord preached "the Gospel of the kingdom" to them,—when he proclaimed "the kingdom of heaven is at hand, repent and believe the Gospel,"—a few listened, and inquired, and believed; a somewhat larger portion paid some attention to his message and miracles; but prejudice and interest proved stronger than the love of truth, and they, for reasons which, however unsatisfactory in themselves, they yet could assign, rejected *his* claims as a divine messenger, and *its* claims as a divine revelation. But by far the greater part of them paid no attention to him or to his doctrines. They perhaps heard the common report of the strange sayings and doings of the eloquent and wonder-working Nazarene carpenter, but, intensely interested—busily engaged—in other pursuits, they made no inquiry, caring for none of these things.

"The thing that has been now is." Even of those who are professed infidels, a very large body have rejected the Gospel, without ever seriously attending either to its meaning or evidence. They would be much puzzled to give anything like a satisfactory answer either to the question, What is the system of principles, called the Gospel, which you reject as false and absurd? or to the question, What are the grounds on which you reckon its evidence defective, or its doctrines incredible? They do indeed "speak evil of things they understand not." They pronounce judgment on a complicated question which they have never examined. They judge a cause before they hear it, and, according to Solomon's sarcastic remark, "it is folly and shame to them."[1] It is credibly recorded of David Hume—certainly not one of the least endowed, or worst informed of unbelievers—that he acknowledged that he had never carefully read the whole of the New Testament.

But this inattention is by no means confined to professed infidels. An immense proportion of those who are called by others, and thought by themselves, Christians, have never received the Gospel in the sense even of making it the subject of considerate thought, or serious examination. Though living in a country where the New Testament is the most common of all books, and christian churches the most common of all public buildings, they seldom, if ever, read the inspired gospel testimony at home; they but very unfrequently are found in the public assemblies where that inspired testimony, in its meaning and evidence, is explained and pressed on the attention of the auditors. There are others who read the Bible occasionally, it may be frequently,—who attend on the institutions of christian instruction sometimes, perhaps regularly,—who yet do both with an entire absence of everything like intellectual effort, and, therefore, without anything like distinct apprehension or

[1] Prov. xviii. 13.

serious impression. These persons cannot be said, in any sense, to have received the Gospel, except that it has been brought within their reach. Their eyes have glanced along the lines, and distinguished the letters and words, but these might nearly as well have been Egyptian hieroglyphics, or the characters and terms of an unknown tongue. Their ears have heard the sounds which, to an attentive, understanding, enlightened mind, convey treasures of knowledge, but to them are but "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." Nay, in some cases, the words in which the revelation of mercy is clearly unfolded have been impressed on their memories; but, though the words are in the memory, the thoughts they express are not at all in their minds. Ask them to give an account of what the Gospel is, and what gives it the claim to the assent which they profess to yield it; and, though they may have had the Bible in their hands from their infancy, though they may be in the habit of hearing the Gospel preached from the pulpit, you will find that they are utterly incapable of giving anything approaching to a satisfactory answer. If they were roused, by some startling accident, to a sense of their nearness to eternity, and their unpreparedness for it, and if the question, "What must I do to be saved?" were forced on their consideration, they would find, to their surprise probably, as well as to their terror, that they have no distinct idea of the way of salvation. All is confusion, uncertainty, and darkness.

This mode of treating the gospel-revelation, however common it may be, is in the highest degree unreasonable and hazardous. The Gospel is "the Gospel of salvation," but it is so only to him who receives it; and it cannot be received if it is not considered. It is "the power of God unto salvation," but it is so only "to him that believeth;" and understanding is requisite to faith, and attention to understanding.

The gospel revelation *deserves* considerate attention, and it *requires* considerate attention.

It deserves considerate attention. It does so even on the part of the man who professes not to be satisfied as to its claims to a divine origin. No man who has ever read the New Testament, or heard the Gospel faithfully preached, if he have the understanding of a man, can for a moment seriously assert that the book or the system bears on its front the brand of obvious imposture. Neither is intuitively false; and, if they *may* be true, though the probability, at first sight, may not be very strong, they deserve serious consideration. Their subjects are so obviously of transcendent importance, and their statements hang so well together, and have so many tokens of probability, that to reject them without the most thorough examination, is altogether inexcusable. No ingenuity can vindicate the giving the go-by to a question, or the trifling with its examination, the wrong determination of which may induce an eternity of misery.

But, if it be thus obviously unreasonable, even for professed sceptics or unbelievers, to refuse to attend to the gospel testimony, how immeasurably more unreasonable must such a course be in those who profess to admit the truth and divinity of that testimony? What should we attend to, if not to a divine revelation respecting the character and the will of Him who is our Creator, our Preserver, our Proprietor, our Benefactor, our Governor, our Judge; and respecting the only way in which we, guilty, depraved, miserable, mortal, immortal beings, may be restored to the Divine favour, and secure an eternity of holy happiness? What can deserve serious consideration if this does not? What madness to yield an eager attention to the passing vanities of the present state, to the neglect of these supreme and almost sole realities! The man who, knowing that the gospel-testimony refers to these subjects, though hesitating as to its evidence, refuses, through indolence, to examine that evidence, no doubt acts very unreasonably. "Professing himself to be wise, he proves himself a fool." But he

who, professing to admit the divine authority of the gospel testimony, is yet habitually inattentive to its statements, is distinguished by a degree of moral madness, compared with which the infidel's folly is wisdom. Yet how many among us do act this most guilty, most absurd, part! How comparatively few "give the more earnest heed" due "to the things which have been spoken" by the Son of God from heaven!

As the Gospel *deserves* that attention, by means of which alone it can be received into the mind, so it *requires* it. There are many men who, if we might judge of their opinions from their conduct, seem to hold that the gospel-revelation is talismanic or magical in its operation. They seem to think that the having the book in our hands, or at any rate the having the words in our memories, will secure to us its ultimate object, the salvation of the soul. It requires but little reflection to perceive that the Gospel is a moral remedy for a moral disease, and must operate according to its nature in producing its effects. It must be understood and believed in order to be effectual in making us either holy or happy; and, from the constitution of the human mind, it cannot be understood and believed unless it be attended to.

The Gospel, as I have showed at full length in a former section, is no intricate complicated system of abstract principles, like the systems of philosophy and science. It is a plainly-expressed, fully-attested statement of facts; but, plain as is the statement, abundant as is the evidence, if they are not attended to, the one cannot be understood, the other cannot be apprehended. It does not require extensive learning, nor remarkable acuteness, to comprehend the meaning, and to perceive the evidence, of the gospel testimony; but it does require attentive reflection—considerate thought.

There is no hope of a man ever receiving the Gospel, if he continues inconsiderate and light-minded on such subjects. A man may be, to a considerable degree, both attra-

tive and serious, and yet, owing to certain moral, or rather immoral influences, may come short of receiving the Gospel, or may receive this grace of God in vain; but, without attentive reflection, without serious consideration, it is, in the very nature of things, impossible for a man to receive that Gospel, by which alone he can be saved.

I remark, in the second place, that to receive the Gospel, we must firmly believe it. Attention and faith are two very distinct things. There can be no rational faith without a previous exertion of attention; but attention may in some cases increase, instead of diminishing, scepticism. The natural terminus of the mind may be unbelief, not faith. I may closely attend to a statement which, whether rightly or wrongly, I consider as false; and I may closely attend to a statement without ever asking the question whether it be true or false.

He who attends to the Gospel in either of these ways will never do his duty in reference to it. He will never receive it; and, never receiving it, it is plain that he can never retain it. Truth must be believed in order to its being received into the mind. The witness or testimony of God is represented by the Apostle John as without the man so long as he continues in unbelief; but on his believing, on his setting to his seal that God is true, he "hath the witness," or the testimony of God, "in himself."[1] God speaks to him, in his mind and heart, by that testimony which he has believed.

There are no subjects on which men have more darkened counsel by words without knowledge, than the faith of the gospel-testimony, the manner in which this faith is produced, and the way in which, when produced, this faith operates in putting the sinner in possession of the blessings of the christian salvation. Faith is counting a statement true on the authority of him who makes it,—that is, from a confi-

[1] John iii. 33.

dence in his intelligence and veracity. The faith of the Gospel is the reckoning the gospel-testimony to be true on the authority of God, who gives it,—that is, from a conviction that He has given it, and that it is equally impossible that HE should be deceived, and that He should deceive. The believer of the Gospel perceives the meaning of the gospel-testimony: he perceives also the evidence that that testimony is what it professes to be—the testimony of God: and on that ground, that ground alone, he counts it "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation;" he knows and is sure that these things are so, because God has said them. He reckons, on this ground, that it is the very truth most sure, "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures;"—that he was "delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification;"—that "his blood cleanseth us from all sin;"—and that, ever living to make intercession for us, "he is able to save us to the uttermost."

Thus to believe, is obviously something altogether different from a blind implicit faith,—receiving these or any other doctrines as true, in consequence of having been taught them by parents, teachers, or ministers,—and also from assent to propositions, either intuitively perceived, or demonstratively shown to be true. In its general nature, it corresponds to belief of facts for the knowledge of which we are indebted to the testimony of others,—differing, however, in this respect, that in the case of human testimony there is always room for hesitation, as there is always a possibility of the witness or witnesses being deficient in knowledge or in veracity, or in both, whereas here, on the evidence that the gospel-testimony is the testimony of God being distinctly perceived, there can be no place for doubt as to the truth testified,—it being equally evident that God cannot be deceived and that he cannot deceive; so that the enlightened

believer may well say, "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son."[1]

The evidence that the gospel-testimony is indeed the testimony of God is most abundant and multifarious. Every fulfilled prediction,—every recorded miracle,—the success of the Gospel in opposition to obstacles which, on any other hypothesis, must have been insurmountable,—and the salutary and altogether peculiar influence which it has exerted in transforming the human character,—afford satisfactory proof that the Gospel of our salvation is indeed the voice of God. "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets," has spoken to us of the great salvation, through his "purging our sins by himself;" and "the word spoken" by him has been "confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will."[2]

That such a testimony, so confirmed, deserves to be credited,—received "with much assurance,"—with "all riches of the full assurance of understanding,"—and that men, to whom it comes, cannot refuse to credit it without acting most unreasonably and wickedly,—is so plain as not to require—indeed, scarcely to admit of—illustration. No duty is more distinctly required in Scripture than this. The Father, from the most excellent glory, proclaims, "This is my beloved Son: hear him;" and the Son, in his personal ministry, and by his apostles, proclaims, "Repent ye"—change your mind—"and believe the Gospel."[3] And surely nothing can be plainer than this, that if God has given us a clear fully-accredited revelation of his will, it is our duty to believe it, and that nothing but some immoral cause—which, because it is an immoral cause, cannot be

[1] 1 John v. 9. [2] Heb. i. 1-3; ii. 3, 4. [3] Mark ix. 7; i. 15.

sustained as either excuse or palliation for unbelief—can prevent our believing such a revelation.

The doctrine of Christianity on this subject is most clearly and strikingly taught by our Lord himself, in his discourse with Nicodemus. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." [1]

This primary duty, under the new economy, requires no faculty of which every man is not possessed. It requires the faculties of perceiving the meaning of plain propositions, and of recognising the force of distinct evidence, and no more. The faith of the Gospel, were it not for the depravity of man, would be of all duties the most easy and pleasant; and nothing, perhaps, places in so strong a point of view the power of that depravity, as the fact that, without a special divine influence fixing the mind on the meaning and evidence of the Divine testimony, which forms the saving truth, no human being ever did—no human being ever will—believe the Gospel. Men *will* not come to the Saviour, that they may have life. They could if they would.

And this indisposition is removed by divine influence. "No man comes to Christ unless the Father draw him;"

[1] John iii. 14-20.

and "every one that has been taught, and who has learned of the Father, comes to him." This influence is exerted in accordance with the constitution of the human mind. No new faculties are imparted—no new revelation is given; but the power of the immoral influences, which keep the mind and the revelation, in its true meaning and power, apart, is overruled. The mind of the man is so fixed on the truth and its evidence, that he cannot but believe it; and then he cannot but "will to come to Christ that he may have life."

From what has been said, if it has been at all understood, it must be very evident that those persons labour under a strange mistake who suppose that faith is some great, very difficult work, which the sinner must perform in order to enjoy the blessings of the christian salvation, and who set about working themselves up to a particular state of mind, which they suppose to be faith, instead of fixing their attention on the Divine testimony, that they may see at once what they are to believe, and why they are to believe it. Till the object and the ground of faith are before the mind, faith is a moral impossibility; and when they are—a result uniformly produced by divine influence—faith is a matter of course.

There is nothing, in reference to this part of our duty with regard to the Gospel, of more vital importance than to take care, first, that it be the Gospel we believe; and, secondly, to take care that we believe the Gospel. I have said elsewhere, and I make no apology for repeating the statement,—"It is the truth respecting Christ's atoning sacrifice that must be believed, in order to salvation; and, in order to salvation, this truth must be believed. It is not believing anything that will save us, just as it is not eating anything that will nourish us. If a man eat poison, it will kill him; if he eat innutritious substances, he will be starved. There are many strong believers that are in hell, and on the way to it; but they have believed a lie, not the truth as it

is in Jesus. And not only is it the *truth* that must be believed if we would be saved, but the truth must be *believed* in order to our being saved. Knowing it, understanding the terms in which it is stated, speculating about it, talking about it, fighting about it, will not do, if it be not believed; just as looking at nourishing provision, smelling it, handling it, talking about it, quarrelling about it, will not suffice for our nourishment. We must eat, else, notwithstanding its nutritive qualities, we must starve. In like manner, of whatever intellectual exercise saving truth may be the subject, if it be not really believed, we cannot be saved by it. By this faith of the truth it is much more intimately received, than by merely making its meaning and evidence the subject of attentive inquiry. Then it was before the door, or but in the porch, undergoing an examination whether it was safe and proper to admit it into the interior. When the examination is completed, and the celestial visitant's true character is discerned, faith takes the place of doubt. The language of the mind is, 'Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?'"

I remark, in the third place, that to receive the Gospel, we must cordially and gratefully acquiesce in it. The Gospel must not only be attended to as obviously important, and believed as undoubtedly true; the faithful saying is worthy of "*all* acceptation"—of the heartiest welcome.

It ought to be received in a manner suited to its character—as good news. It is the Gospel of the grace of God—the kindness of God the Saviour towards man. It is the Gospel of peace—of reconciliation between God and man. It "brings good tidings;" it "publishes peace"—"peace on earth, good-will to men;" it proclaims "peace—peace to him who is afar off, and to him who is near." It "bringeth good tidings of good;" it "publishes salvation."

Though, then, they to whom this message comes had no direct interest in it, it would argue a want of benevolence not to rejoice in it: but, surely, those whose deliverance

from deep, hopeless misery it announces, ought to receive it with cordial joy. Indeed, wherever it is understood and believed, and just in the degree in which it is understood and believed, it produces this effect. There is joy and peace in believing the Gospel. It cannot be otherwise. The believing hearers of the first gospel sermon "gladly received the word," [1] and so has every believer in every succeeding age.

Nor should it have only a glad, but a grateful reception. It announces and conveys the most important benefits—pardon and peace, holiness and joy. In receiving the Gospel, we receive the Saviour it makes known, and the salvation that is in him, with eternal glory; and, surely, the language of the heart ought to be—must be—"Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God, even his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever. Amen." "Salvation to our God and to the Lamb, for ever and ever." "What shall we render to the Lord for all his benefits?"

It only remains, on this part of the subject, that I remark, in the fourth place, that in order to the right reception of the Gospel, there must be humble practical submission to it. The Gospel is an authoritative declaration of the mind and will of God, intended and calculated to transform the inner and regulate the outer man. It is directly opposed to the opinions and inclinations of fallen man. It is not rightly received, except where "it casts down high thoughts," and every imagination which opposes the Divine mind and will. He only receives the Gospel aright, who, renouncing his own wisdom, gives himself up entirely to the guidance of the great Teacher whom the Gospel reveals, determined to hear *Him*, to believe whatever He says, and to believe it because He says it,—who, renouncing his own righteous-

[1] Acts ii. 41.

ness, submits to "the righteousness of God"—"the righteousness which is of the faith of Christ"—"the righteousness of God by faith"—saying, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness;" "in the Lord am I justified,"[1]—who, renouncing his own right to self-government, acknowledges the Saviour whom the Gospel reveals as his Lord, whose he is, and whom he is determined to serve. Such a person is "transformed by the renewing of his mind," which is produced by the Gospel being brought into his mind and heart by faith, and "*proves* the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God." He has "a conversation becoming the Gospel," and, taught by that manifestation of the Divine grace which the Gospel contains, he "denies ungodliness and worldly lusts, and lives soberly, righteously, and godly, in this evil world; looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of Him who is the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us to himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works," "walking in all his commandments and ordinances."

It is a most important truth, that the Gospel is not rightly received when the Saviour is not rightly received. He only has rightly received the Gospel, of whom it can be said—"Of God is he in Christ Jesus, who of God is made to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."[2] He trusts in Christ; he rejoices in Christ Jesus; he relies exclusively on His atonement for pardon, on His Spirit for sanctification; he has received Christ Jesus the Lord, and he "walks in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith as he has been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving;" entirely dependent on Him—complete in Him—receiving daily, according to his necessities, out of His fulness, grace for grace. This is to receive the Gospel.

The practical bearing of the observations which have

[1] Isa. xlv. 24, 25. [2] 1 Cor. i. 30.

been made, must have been obvious to every attentive reader.

First, they call on us seriously to inquire if we have received the Gospel. It has often been preached to us; but it is preached to many all their days, who never receive it, or receive it in vain. Have we ever attended to it? Has it ever been a subject of serious consideration with us? Do we understand it? Have we examined its evidence? Have we really believed it? Do we know, and are we sure, that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures"? Is the Gospel with us "a faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation"? Is the testimony not merely without us, but within us? Have we really set to our seal that God is true, when he proclaims that Christ is the Saviour of the world? Have we obtained peace in the reception of the Gospel? Have we good hope through grace? Has the Gospel, which is the doctrine of the cross, crucified the world to us, and us to the world? Do we know, from experience, what the obedience of faith is? Are we walking at liberty, keeping our Lord's commandments,—serving him, or at least seeking to serve him, without fear, in righteousness and holiness every day of our life?

Then, secondly, if we are obliged to come to the conclusion that we have not *thus* received the Gospel, let us ask ourselves why we have not received it? I am sure no good, no satisfactory, reason can be given. It is not that the Gospel has not been preached to us; it is not that its statements are unintelligible, or its evidence defective: no, it is, disguise it as we may, the "light has come into the world, and we love the darkness rather than the light, because our deeds are evil." Have we made up our minds never to receive it? I scarcely believe this is the case with any one. The great body of neglecters of the Gospel think they will receive it sometime before they die; for they have a fear, which they cannot get rid of, that if they do not, they must perish for ever. Why not receive it now? Is it too soon to be

happy and safe? Do they expect any new revelation, any additional evidence? The longer they delay to receive it, the less likely is it that they will ever receive it. It will not always be proposed for their reception. There is no Gospel preached to the dead—to the damned; and how soon may they be both? "*Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation."

Finally, if, on examination, we find that we have received the Gospel of the grace of God, let us remember that we must be constantly receiving the Gospel, constantly receiving the Saviour. It is not enough that we have believed, we must habitually believe; and the life we live in the flesh, must be a life of faith on the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. We have received, it may be, much—but we may receive more, much more. There is a fathomless measure of blessings in the Gospel, and in the Saviour it reveals. How little do the best of us experimentally know of *it*, know of *him*, in comparison of what we might—what we ought to know! We have "not attained," we are very far from being "already perfect;" but "let us follow after that we may apprehend, that for which also we have been apprehended of Christ Jesus: and while we do not count ourselves to have apprehended, let us do this one thing, forgetting the things that are behind, let us reach forth unto those things which are before, and press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Let us never be satisfied with, though always thankful for, what we have received *of* the Gospel, *by* the Gospel. Let us seek more knowledge, more faith, more hope, more holiness, more joy, and seek all in the Gospel and in the Saviour; and let us often "bow our knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and in earth is named, the Father of Glory, that he would give to us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of himself, that, the eyes of our understanding being enlightened, we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches

of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding riches of his power to us ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power; that he would grant to us, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with all strength in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our heart by faith; that being rooted and grounded in love, we may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." "Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN."

(2.) *To retain it.*

The second part of the duty of those to whom the Gospel is preached is to retain it, to stand in it, to "keep it in memory," to hold it fast. The expression "to stand *in* the Gospel,"[1] though a strictly literal rendering of the original phrase, does not readily suggest a very distinct idea to a person acquainted only with the English language. It may signify to stand *on* the Gospel, as a warrior stands firm and secure when he has gained a position from which his enemy cannot dislodge him, thus conveying the idea that it is in the receiving of the Gospel he is safe, and that it is only in continuing to receive the Gospel he can continue safe. It may signify to stand by—*i. e.*, by means of—the Gospel, indicating that it is the Gospel itself, in the hand of the Holy Spirit, that is the instrumental cause of the Christian's stability or perseverance in that state of holy happiness into which the reception of the Gospel has introduced him; or, finally, it may signify, to stand in reference to the Gospel,

[1] "στήκειν ἐν τίνι metaphora e palæstra desumpta est *firmiter stare, perseverare in aliqua re, constantem esse*, 1 Cor. xvi. 13; Gal. v. 1; Phil. i. 27; iv. 1; 1 Thess. iii. 8; 2 Thess. ii. 15. Idem quod στῆναι, Eph. vi. 11, 13, 14."—KRAUSE.

indicating that the Corinthian Christians, who had received the Gospel which the apostle had preached to them, had not apostatised, were giving no symptom of apostasy, but were continuing stedfast in the faith, the profession, the comfort, and obedience of the truth as it is in Jesus.

The expression rendered "keep in memory," but very imperfectly expresses the force of the original term.[1] So far as I know, the word is never employed by itself to express this idea. It implies remembering the Gospel, holding it in the memory; but it does so just as it implies attending to it, believing it, loving it, submitting to it, holding it in the judgment and in the affections. The literal meaning of the word is, "hold fast." It is used here just as it is by our Lord in Luke viii. 15, where they who, "in a good and honest heart" have heard the word, *i. e.*, received the Gospel, are said to "*keep* it," to hold it fast, and "bring forth fruit with patience," *i. e.*, persevere in bringing forth fruit; or as it is used by the apostle, when he exhorts the Corinthians to "*keep*," to hold fast, *i. e.*, to persevere in observing "the ordinances" as he had "delivered them," and the Thessalonians to "hold fast that which is good," and as when he speaks of the Hebrew Christians as "holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end," "holding fast the beginning of their confidence,"—their first confidence—"stedfast to the end," and exhorts them to "hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering."[2]

It is quite plain, then, that the great leading idea in both of the apostle's expressions is the same—steady, immoveable regard to the Gospel; habitual, constant perseverance; not losing hold of any of it that we have apprehended, but seeking to obtain a fuller and firmer grasp of it; continuing and increasing in attention to the Gospel, faith in the Gospel, acquiescence in the Gospel, submission to the Gospel.

[1] "To keep in memory suggests a very inadequate sense of κατέχετε."—DODDRIDGE.

[2] 1 Cor. xi. 2. 1 Thess. v. 21. Heb. iii. 6, 14; x. 23.

This is to stand in the Gospel; this is to hold fast the Gospel.

It may be said—and it sometimes has been said—'But is not this a matter of course? Is it not absolutely certain that all who receive the Gospel shall retain it—that they who once are enabled to apprehend it by the power of the Divine Spirit, shall never be allowed to let it go—that they who once really stand on the Gospel shall never be moved from off it, nor fall on it—that the faith of the truth by which men receive the Gospel is the gift of God, an irrevocable gift, one of those gifts in reference to which "there is no repentance"? Why then urge Christians to stand, as if they could fall?—why say "ye shall be saved if ye hold fast the Gospel," when it is equally certain that they shall be saved, and that they shall hold fast the Gospel?—why call on them to hold fast, as if they could let go?'

When these questions are put, as they have sometimes been, by men professing to be Christians, and have been urged as an objection against pressing perseverance in faith and holiness as the Christian's duty—a duty indissolubly connected with his final salvation—as well as preaching perseverance in faith and holiness as a privilege infallibly secured through the atonement and Spirit of Christ to every genuine believer, it is surely quite enough to say, 'Jesus Christ and the apostles very frequently and very plainly follow the course objected to; and we have no desire to be more orthodox or consistent in our teaching than they were. If we do not perceive the consistency between two portions of their doctrine, the true cause is not their inconsistency, but our ignorance. If we closely follow *them*—if we teach nothing but what they taught, and if we teach all that they taught, we cannot go wrong ourselves, nor lead others wrong.' This is a great deal more than can be said for any scheme of human teaching, which, to secure absolute and obvious consistency, does violence to the natural signification of any of the oracles of God. In the case before us, however, the

inconsistency is merely apparent. I have the firmest conviction that no man who, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, really believes the Gospel, shall ever make shipwreck in reference to this faith. In becoming a believer, he becomes one of Christ's sheep; and I give entire credit to the good Shepherd, when he says, "I give unto" my sheep "eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." [1] I believe that He that begins the good work in his people will "perform," *i. e.*, finish "it, until the day of Christ." But I know that there are many who profess to have received the Gospel, who seem to others to have received it, who themselves think that they have received it, who yet do not retain it. Our Lord speaks of some, in his days, who, when they heard the word, "anon with joy received it," who yet, "not having root in themselves, dured but for a while," for "when tribulation or persecution for the sake of the word arose, by and by they were offended," [2] stumbled—they "went back, and walked no more with him;" and of others who, after having seemed to receive the word, became unfruitful from the prevailing love of the world. Such men are to be found in all ages. They are by no means uncommon among ourselves. It is surely most important, for preventing self-deception, to proclaim to all that the only satisfactory evidence of having rightly received the Gospel is the retaining the Gospel, and that persevering faith is the only faith that can be safely held to be saving faith. The true believer, though he is secured from final apostasy, may, to a lamentable extent, allow the saving, sanctifying, truth to slip out of his mind; he may admit false principles into his mind, which, so far as they have influence, will go to neutralise and oppose the effect of the truth; through his indolence, or love of the world, he may fail of obtaining those enlarged views,

[1] John x. 28, 29.

[2] Matt. xiii. 20, 21.

those firm convictions, of divine truth, which he might otherwise have obtained, and which would have increased the measure both of his holiness and comfort; and he may thus greatly and permanently suffer loss. And the natural preventive and cure of these evils is just such statements as that of the apostle in the passage before us, 'that if, having received the Gospel, men hold it fast, they shall be saved by it, not otherwise'—and that kindred one in the Epistle to the Hebrews, 'we belong to that family over which Christ, as the Son, is set, "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope stedfast to the end,"[1] not otherwise,'—and the Master's still more striking annunciation, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved."[2]

Let us now, then, proceed to the illustration of this second part of the duty, in reference to the Gospel, of those to whom it is preached, as represented by the apostle; and let us hope that mere speculators and professors, of whom there are so many among us, may be driven from those refuges of lies in which they are so apt to seek and find shelter from the uneasiness of a conscience never sprinkled by the blood of atonement, never soothed into solid peace by the Spirit of peace, through the faith of the Gospel of peace, and may be made restless till they find begun peace in receiving the Gospel, and permanent peace in retaining the Gospel; and that all true believers may be induced to "show all diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that they be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

The holding fast the Gospel, is just substantially the persevering in receiving the Gospel,—the habitual, ever-increasing reception of the Gospel in its enlightening, bliss-producing, sanctifying influence. The truth on this subject may be brought out, we think, in a distinct and impressive form, in the illustration of this complex proposition: He

[1] Heb. iii. 14. [2] Matt. xxiv. 13.

retains the Gospel, who habitually makes the revelation in which the Gospel and its evidence are contained, the subject of considerate thought,—who habitually believes firmly its declarations,—who habitually acquiesces cordially in it, enjoying those satisfactions and delights which the faith of it naturally inspires,—who habitually submits practically to it, cultivating the dispositions and following the practices to which the faith of it naturally leads.

I remark, then, in the first place, that, to *retain* the Gospel, we must make that revelation in which the Gospel and its evidence are contained, the subject of habitual considerate thought. If we have *received* the Gospel, we have got it either directly or indirectly from the Holy Scriptures. The more directly we have got it from them, so much the better. It is then more likely to be the unadulterated Gospel—"the sincere milk of the word;" and, in the measure in which it is so, it will be found the better fitted for answering all the important purposes for which it is intended. What we have learned of it we are in constant danger of forgetting and letting slip; and the only certain way of retaining what we have, as well as of increasing our store, is the constant application of the means by which we originally obtained possession of it. The Gospel becomes the more fixed in our minds, as we become more thoroughly acquainted with it. It is hard to retain it when it is in the mind only in disjointed fragments. But when, in consequence of our increased knowledge, it takes its own form—that of a well-compacted system—it obtains a firm hold of the mind, and so fills it as to prevent the entrance into it of principles which have a tendency to expel it, or at any rate to neutralise its influence.

He, then, who would hold fast the Gospel, must make the Scriptures, and especially the New Testament, the subject of his frequent, habitual serious study. By this devout study of the inspired writings, in which the Gospel with its evidence is presented to the mind, we more clearly understand its import, and perceive its varied excellence and use-

fulness. Superficial, limited views of the Gospel are naturally connected with a low estimate of its importance and value; and the best way of correcting these is to ponder the statements of that book, where it is represented as the disclosure of "a mystery," which, during many ages and generations, was "hid in God," the partial unveiling of which makes the highest order of unfallen created intelligences but the more devoutly desirous to contemplate all its wonders. "Into those things," to which the Gospel relates, "the angels desire to look." There is no danger of *their* not retaining what of the Gospel *they* have received; and the more we approximate to them in the clearness and distinctness of our apprehensions of the Gospel, the more are we likely to resemble them in our placing it in our very heart of hearts as the most valuable of our treasures—a treasure more precious to us than it ever can be to them. For this purpose let us "search the Scriptures." We are to expect no other revelation. In truth, we need no other; we are far from having mastered this. Oh, how far are we from knowing the height and depth, the length and breadth, of that revealed mystery, in which is made known the manifold wisdom of God—the exceeding greatness of His power—the immaculate purity of His holiness—the stern inflexibility of His justice, and the unsearchable riches of His mercy! "Let, then, the word of Christ dwell in us richly." Let us frequently, habitually, perseveringly study the Gospel, as unfolded there, that we may stand in it and hold it fast.

I remark, in the second place, that, to *retain* the Gospel, we must habitually believe firmly its declarations. We never properly lay hold of the Gospel as truth till we believe it; and it is only by continuing to believe it that we can hold it fast. He who doubts, loosens his hold of it; he who disbelieves, lets it go altogether. There are men who seem to think that *faith*, of which they have very indistinct ideas, is something which requires to be done once for all—or at any rate but occasionally, and at distant in-

tervals. They have a notion that a man must believe when he is *converted*, and also that, on remarkable occasions, such as taking the sacrament, as they phrase it, there should be an acting of faith. But they do not understand, even in theory, far less experimentally, what the apostle says, and what is true of every genuine Christian as well as of him, "The life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."[1]

It is truth present to the mind as truth—that is, it is the Gospel believed—which alone can be the source either of peace or of holiness. Present faith is the means of present sanctification and present comfort. He holds fast the Gospel, who—in opposition to the influences of the present evil world, which so powerfully tend towards the subjection of the mind to things seen and temporal, to the arguments, and sneers, and example of unbelieving men, and to the movements of the evil heart, that most crafty of all infidel sophisters,—habitually thinks, feels, and acts as seeing the world that is unseen, and the God who is invisible,—who has habitually a deep sense of the reality of the great facts which the Gospel announces,—who knows, and is sure—counts it "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation"—that the incarnate Only-begotten of God did so die the just one in the room of the unjust, that his blood cleanseth from all sin, and now lives for ever, by the power of God, so as to be able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him. These truths are often, very often, before his mind, not as imaginations, but as realities—the very truth most sure; and even when they are not *sensibly* there, they are exercising an influence over his mind, somewhat similar to that which the belief of certain ultimate facts exercises over the great body of mankind. When anything occurs which calls for their sensible influence being exerted, they are found to be in the mind, and found to be living things there.

[1] Gal. ii. 20.

The grand instrumental means which we ought to employ to secure our thus holding fast the Gospel, is that serious study of the Gospel and its evidence, which was the subject of our last particular. We need not expect to keep the Gospel in our minds, as the object of faith, if we do not keep it there as the object of intellectual apprehension and contemplation; but we are never to forget that the same divine influence which first in our minds transformed what were only abstractions or imaginations into realities, is still requisite to make our habitual contemplation of the Gospel the efficient minister of habitual faith; and, while we use all the means which, according to the rational constitution of our nature, are fitted to produce belief, and, without the use of which it were madness to expect it, let us never forget the necessity of a supernatural influence, which necessity has grown out of the depravity of our nature, and let our reflections on truth and its evidence be sanctified by the frequent and fervent presentation of the petition, "Lord, increase my faith." Thus, thus only, shall we be enabled to hold fast the Gospel, by a firm belief of its statements.

I go on to observe, in the third place, that, to *retain* the Gospel, we must habitually yield to its influence, realising the holy satisfactions and joys which, when believed, it is fitted and intended to produce. The Gospel, when received, by being understood and believed, as I showed in the last section, gives peace to the conscience, and holy joy to the heart. It does so just in the degree in which it is present to the mind. This effect is not peculiar to the entrance of the Gospel into the heart; though, from a contrast with the state of anxiety and fear which generally precedes the first faith of the Gospel, the feeling is then, for the most part, more distinctly recognised by the mind. That which gives the mind peace on entering it, by being retained in it, keeps it, in the measure in which it prevails, in a state of holy peace. The man whose whole religious experience is nothing but an alternation of habitual spiritual apathy and occasional

alarm (and of the religious experience of how many is this the true history?), has reason to fear that he has never received the Gospel; and the reason why he who has received the Gospel has so much agitation, and so little peace—so much anxiety, and so little hope—so much suffering, and so little enjoyment—is just that he does not hold fast the Gospel, by believing its statements. "The assurance of hope" is dependent on "the assurance of faith;" and the comforts of the Gospel cannot be held fast, if the statements of the Gospel be held loosely. But he who holds fast the one, will also hold fast the other. He that has the faith that justifies the person, has the peace which pacifies the conscience, and the joy which gladdens the heart. Happy is the man who thus holds fast the Gospel. He "joys in God, through Jesus Christ, by whom he has received the reconciliation." He "joys even in tribulation," for, believing the Gospel, he knows, and is sure, that to him "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope—the hope that maketh not ashamed." Holding fast "the beginning of his confidence," he holds fast "the rejoicing of his hope." Holding fast the truth as to the perfection of the Saviour's work, and the fulness and freeness of his salvation, even under a sense of his own ill desert and depravity, he can say, believing that in Him—Jehovah—is his righteousness and strength, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels." [1]

It is the duty of those who have received the Gospel in its conscience-tranquillising, heart-gladdening power, to hold it fast. There are but two things of a moral [2] nature that

[1] Isa. lxi. 10.

[2] I say of a *moral* nature, for there are *physical* causes which dissever, during their operation, the faith of the Gospel and the comforts of the Gospel. Cowper is far from being a solitary exemplification of this remark.

can deprive them of it—indulged sin and unbelief. The joys of the Gospel, like the mystery of faith, can be held only in a pure conscience; and, in the degree in which the Gospel is discredited, must the individual cease to possess the joy and peace there is in believing—only in believing. The indulgence of a state of habitual despondency, on the part of those who profess to believe the Gospel, is discrediting to it and to its Author. The command is, "Hold fast," not only "the confidence," but "the rejoicing, of your hope."[1] "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice." But there is no joy which is dutiful, and safe, and lasting, but the joy of faith, which is a holy joy.

I have only farther to remark here, that to complete the idea of *retaining* the Gospel, we must habitually submit practically to it, cultivating the dispositions and following the practices to which the knowledge, and faith, and enjoyment of the Gospel are intended to lead. The only permanently satisfactory evidence that we understand and believe the Gospel, and keep an understood, believed Gospel habitually before our minds, and that the peace and joy we experience in thus habitually contemplating the Gospel are not mere movements of the affections under the influence of the imagination, is to be found in a habitual submission of the heart and life to the sanctifying influence of the truth as it is in Jesus. He only holds fast the Gospel who, under the influence of the views it gives of the character of God—as glorious in holiness and rich in mercy—habitually "sanctifies the Lord God in his heart," and is "in the fear of the Lord all the day long," "loves him with his heart, and soul, and strength, and mind," "trusts in him at all times," and makes him his refuge; who, under the influence of the views it gives us of Jesus Christ, habitually relies on his atonement for pardon, and on his Spirit for spiritual strength and consolation; who, under the influence of the views it gives us

of this world, habitually ceases to expect happiness from it, and, in the expressive language of the apostle, is "crucified to the world," and has "the world crucified to him," through the cross of Christ; who, under the influence of the views it gives us of the other world, habitually "sets his affections on things above," and seeks the things which are *there*, "where Christ sits on God's right hand." That man, and that man alone, holds fast the Gospel who is transformed by it in the spirit of his mind; who, taught by it, as a revelation of "the grace of God," habitually "denies ungodliness and worldly lusts, and lives soberly, righteously, and godly in this world;" who, having believed the Gospel, "adds to his faith virtue"—*i.e.*, fortitude—"and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge temperance" in reference to earthly enjoyments, moderation, "and to moderation patience" under earth's afflictions, "and to patience brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity" to all mankind; who habitually *thinks* on, so as to cherish and exemplify, the things that are true, and honest, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report, and virtuous, and praiseworthy; who, in one word, "by a constant continuance in well-doing, seeks for glory, honour, and immortality." Every unholy disposition indicates that the mind has in some measure lost hold of "the truth which is according to godliness." Every sinful action is an act of practical apostasy. The Gospel is in no proper sense retained by us, if it is not retained in its true character—as the transformer of the heart and the guide of the conduct. Whatever knowledge a man may have of the Gospel, whatever profession of regard for it he may have made, or may still make, if he habitually cherishes unholy affections, and indulges in known sin, He with whom we have to do regards him as having fallen away; and if not renewed again to repentance, the consequence of his connection with the Gospel, whatever it may have been, will not be salvation, but a double perdition.

Such, then, is an attempt to exhibit the true nature and extent of the second department of duty, in reference to the

Gospel, required of those to whom it is preached—to retain it—by habitually making it the subject of serious study, and the object of firm faith, cherishing the holy satisfactions which, when understood, it is fitted to minister to the mind, and cultivating the holy dispositions, and exemplifying the holy habits, which it is intended and calculated to form.

Let us recollect that to *us*, to every *one* of us, this Gospel has been preached, often preached, and that the great body of us profess to have received it. Let us see that there be real as well as professed reception of the Gospel; let us remember equally that there is no retaining what we have not received, and that the only certain, abiding proof that we have *received* the Gospel, is our *retaining* it in all the extent of meaning which we have shown belongs to the word. Let us see that we begin at the beginning; for if we do not, we can never make right progress, we can never finish well. Let us see that we really have received the Gospel, and Christ the Lord in the Gospel, and then let us stand in it and hold it fast, or, as the apostle has it, let us "walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as we have been taught." Let us beware of letting slip the Gospel; let us beware of renouncing either explicitly or implicitly the Gospel, or any part of it. Let us take care that the wicked one do not take away the word sown in our hearts. Let us see that the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, do not choke it so that it becomes unfruitful. Let us be cheered by the promises to those who persevere in holding fast the Gospel. Let us be awed by the denunciations against those who apostatise from the faith of Christ.

How animating are these promises to perseverance! "He that endureth to the end *shall* be saved." "He shall never fall, but an entrance shall be ministered to him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "Hold fast that which thou hast received; let no man take thy crown. To him that overcometh will I give

to sit with me on my throne, even as I have overcome, and have sat down with my Father on his throne." "Let us hold fast, then, the profession of our faith"—*i. e.*, the Gospel—"without wavering, for he is faithful who hath *thus* promised."

How alarming are these denunciations against apostasy! "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." He that turns back, turns back to perdition. "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth"—that is, if we let go, renounce the Gospel—"there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "If after men have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them

not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." "Beloved, beware lest ye also, being led away with the errors of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness." Surely "we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" [1]

Animated by these promises, and awed by these warnings, let us, then, standing on the Gospel, build ourselves up on our most holy faith; and may the only wise God our Saviour, He who alone can keep us from falling, enable us so to stand and build as that at last we may be presented by him faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. "To him be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen."

§ 4. *The result of the performance of this duty of receiving and retaining the Gospel.*

Salvation is represented by the apostle as the certain result of receiving and retaining the Gospel, salvation through that Gospel received and retained. "Ye shall be saved," says he, "by that Gospel which I have preached to you, which ye have received, and wherein ye stand, if ye keep it

[1] Heb. vi. 4-7; x. 26-31. 2 Pet. ii. 20-22. Heb. ii. 1-4.

in memory," or rather, "if ye hold it fast." [1] There are obviously two subjects to which our attention must be turned, in order to our perceiving distinctly the meaning and evidence of the apostle's statement—first, the salvation enjoyed by those who receive and retain the Gospel; and, secondly, the influence of the Gospel on their obtaining this salvation. They are *saved*, and they are saved *by the Gospel*.

(1.) *Salvation.*

Let us first, then, endeavour to form a correct notion of that salvation which the apostle represents as sure to all who receive and retain the Gospel.

Salvation is deliverance. None need to be delivered who are not in a state of misery or of danger; and to understand what deliverance in any particular instance is, it is obviously necessary to understand what are the miseries or the dangers of those who need to be saved, and what is requisite to free them from these miseries and dangers. When we say a man is saved, to complete the sense, we must know from what, and how. To save a man from disease, is to cure him; to save a man from drowning, is to rescue him from the waves. When we think, then, of men as saved, we are naturally led to think of them as previously involved in misery and danger; and just views of the nature, origin, and extent of this misery and danger are plainly requisite to distinct apprehension of the salvation obtained by them. Farther, when, as is the case with mankind, the state of misery and danger is not the original state of the being standing in need of deliverance,

[1] τίνι λόγῳ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν. We think it on the whole better, with our translators, to connect these words with εἰ κατέχετε,—finding, with De Wette, a reason for the transposition in the greater emphasis,—than with Billroth and Heydenreich, and others, to consider the clause as hanging on γνωρίζω, in the first verse. It is a singularly complicated expression for a very simple thought,—'I declare to you in what manner I have preached unto you the Gospel, which I have preached unto you, and you have received.' The phrase τ. λ. ε. υ. ε. κ. is equivalent to—'If ye hold fast the doctrine *as* I have announced it to you.' Grotius remarks well, "Est et hic trajectio et λόγῳ positum est pro modo." "τίνι λόγῳ, quomodo."—Em. Sa.

but a superinduced one, correct conceptions concerning the primal state of happiness and security, and respecting what made that state happy and secure, and respecting, too, the nature and causes of the unhappy change which converted happiness into misery, and security into danger, must be of high importance, if not of absolute necessity, to just views, both of the state to be delivered from, and the state to be raised to.

Though, in the present condition of human nature, all men are, from the first moment of their conscious being, in a state of spiritual destitution, and danger, and misery, this was not the original condition of the race. The original state of man was one of happiness and of safety. Created in the image of God—capable of knowledge, will, action, and enjoyment—and exercising all these faculties in an entire conformity to the will of God—thinking and willing, acting, and enjoying, in accordance with God,—man was the object of the benignant regard, the moral approbation, the complacential delight, of Him who is infinite in power, and wisdom, and righteousness, and benignity; and, knowing this, he could not but be happy, up to the measure of his capacity of happiness: and, continuing to occupy this place in the Divine regard, and to know that he occupied it, as he must have done, had he persevered in his integrity, nothing, it would seem, could be before him in time or in eternity but a constant endless increase of capacity of enjoyment in God,—and, as the source of enjoyment was infinite, and therefore inexhaustible, an endlessly increasing happiness to fill this endlessly increasing capacity of enjoying it. In this case there would have been no need of salvation or deliverance. The word would have had no meaning in reference to man. The very idea would have been unknown; for the only lost beings in the universe then—the fallen angels—are lost beyond recovery,—they are not to be saved. There would—there could—have been no painful sense of want, though a constant feeling of entire dependence,—no

restraint, though the most complete subjection to the Divine authority,—no suffering, no sense of insecurity, no fear of evil. God could not—would not—hurt them; and while they continued true to him, he would allow none else to hurt them: so that all within must have been perfect peace, —all without, absolute safety. What a delightful vision, which, had man held fast his integrity, would have been a still more delightful reality!

But man became a sinner. Voluntarily yielding to the suggestions of the wicked one, he admitted into his mind false views of the Divine Being, became a backslider in heart from God, doubted his faithfulness and his benignity; and, under the influence of these principles, violated the holy, just, and good law under which he had been placed, and madly, wickedly, seeking happiness away from God, necessarily lost the happiness he had in God; and, having known by experience that it was good for man to be near God, was now to know, by experience too, that they who are far from God are lost, and must perish if they are not saved.

Man the sinner could not be the object of the moral approbation and complacent regard of the just and holy unchanging One, that man the innocent and obedient was. He might be—he was—regarded with a generous pity; but, as guilty, he could not but be the object of the Divine judicial disapprobation, he could not but be the object of the Divine moral dislike. Man's relations to God and his government were thus revolutionised. The happiness of man was rendered incompatible with the glory of God. Human nature was placed in antagonism to divine. The very perfection of God's nature made it impossible that He should continue to treat man as He had done in his state of primitive integrity. That had been to do what even Omnipotence cannot do—that had been for God to deny himself. The sources of holy happiness to man were thus shut up; and even had it been otherwise, man had rendered

himself incapable of the happiness which flowed from these sources.

It was right, becoming, morally necessary, that He, "of whom are all things, and to whom are all things," should uphold the two pillars of his moral government, which man had madly, impiously attempted to shake, and should thus show that no created being can overthrow the two principles on the maintenance of which all order and happiness depend,—'God's will is, and ought to be, the law of the universe: God's glory is, and ought to be, the end of the universe.' This was what became God, what was meet, what all holy intelligent beings must have expected of him. Accordingly, in the way which seemed best to his infinite wisdom, He "revealed his wrath from heaven against man's unrighteousness" in the infliction of penal evils,—making "his own wickedness to correct him, and his backslidings to reprove him,"—leaving him to the guidance of his own blinded and excessive self-love, and of the crafty and malignant spiritual agents to whose suggestions he had given so easy admission and so ready compliance.

Man the sinner, by actually sinning, had made it evident that he had already fearfully misapprehended the Divine character; and the natural consequence of this actual sin was still deeper delusion respecting God, leading to a constantly increasing estrangement of heart from him. These displaying themselves in a still wider deviation from truth, and purity, and righteousness, at once indicated and strengthened a growing indisposition to holy duties—an increasing incapacity for holy enjoyments; and these, again, drew down farther manifestations of the Divine displeasure in evils of various kinds, which, instead of exciting penitence, in depraved man must have but exasperated enmity. And thus there seemed no possibility of setting bounds either to man's guilt and depravity, or to God's manifestations of displeasure on account of them. This, but for the introduction of the economy of mercy, would have been—must have been—the

history of the first human sinner, as it has been of the angels who kept not their first state; and all his descendants, heirs of the sad inheritance of guilt and depravity, and imitators of his crimes, would have become increasingly depraved and miserable, till, in no very long course of time, it would appear as if—through the natural consequences of the freely developed principles of human depravity—the earth, after having witnessed scenes of pollution, and crime, and wretchedness, surpassing the wildest dreams of imagination, must have become, so far as man is concerned, an uninhabited wilderness, while its successive rational tenants were consigned to those illimitable unseen regions, in which there is room enough for the principles both of good and evil fully to unfold their tendencies,—the regions, to the sinner, of unmixed and unending—probably, too, of ever-increasing—misery.

Such is the origin, nature, and tendency of that state from which man needs salvation; and such, but for the sovereign mercy of God, must have been its result to every human being. Even as it is, modified as the state of mankind has been, by the introduction and progressive operation of the restorative economy, we find every human being, who is not personally interested in the salvation by Christ, in a state of condemnation, depravity, and misery. All have sinned and forfeited the approbation of God. All have violated the law, and are under its righteous curse. They are all condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. All are dead in trespasses and in sins. In them—that is, in their flesh, and there is no Spirit in them—dwells no good thing. They are all the slaves of the wicked one; entangled in his snares; led captive of him at his will. They are all alienated from God, through the ignorance that is in them. They are all the dupes of error and delusion, in endlessly diversified forms. They all serve divers foolish and deceitful lusts, and are under the influence of principles which tend to make themselves and all around them miserable. Suffering, from

external or internal causes, in some form or other, falls to the lot of them all. They are all mortal: Death, as the wages of sin, awaits them all. Their bodies must see corruption, and return to dust. In the separate state, their disembodied spirits must herd with the fallen angels, reserved under chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day. Their resurrection will be a resurrection to damnation; their sentence, on the great judgment day, a sentence to hopeless perdition. Their final state—but language sinks under the attempt to express its horrors. From these awful figurative expressions, "the undying worm," "the unquenchable fire," "the bottomless pit," "blackness of darkness for ever," we obtain some faint ideas of the intensity and duration of its miseries; and the less poetical descriptions of "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," "everlasting destruction," increase rather than diminish the impression, and confirm the conviction, that neither man nor angel can know the power of the anger of that living God who is a consuming fire—that indignation which will destroy unpardoned, unsanctified sinners as his adversaries; and that the most dreadful picture fancy can sketch comes far short of the still more tremendous reality.

If these statements have been understood and believed, we are now in circumstances to form a just, though necessarily an inadequate, judgment of what, in the case of fallen man, is salvation. It is deliverance, complete and eternal, from all these evils, and the possession, in the highest degree of which human nature is capable, of the corresponding benefits. It is change, favourable change, in man's relations, character, and circumstances. Let us shortly attend to these three great aspects of the christian salvation.

1. *A favourable change of state.*

In the first place, salvation is a favourable change of *state*. In this view, it is deliverance from guilt,—exposure, in consequence of a sentence of Divine condemnation, to punish-

ment for sin. It is the forgiveness of sin. This produces an important and most favourable relative change. It reverses the man's position in reference to the sanctions of the Divine law. This is the fundamental blessing of the christian salvation, without which none of the rest could be enjoyed, and with which the possession of all the rest is secure. Man's subjection to the Divine judicial displeasure is, as we have seen, the source of all his miseries and dangers as a fallen being. The removal of this is the source of his deliverance from all these miseries and dangers. The forgiveness of sin, which is the parent blessing of the christian salvation, is a free, full, irreversible remission of the penalty due to transgression—a removal of the sentence of condemnation—a bringing the person into such a state, as that there is not, there shall not be, there cannot be, any more condemnation for him. The saved person is treated as if he had not sinned—nay, as if he had fully answered all the demands of the law upon him. He is "made the righteousness of God,"—justified in the sight of God,—all his trespasses are forgiven. His sins are not imputed to him, but are "cast into the depths of the sea." Every obstacle in the way of God's manifesting his favour to the individual is removed; nay, absolute security is given that, in every way necessary to his final and complete salvation, that favour shall be manifested.

There is something very grand and godlike about this foundation-benefit of the christian salvation. To use the powerful words of that great saint, as well as able theologian, Dr Owen,—"This forgiveness is such as is suitable to the greatness, goodness, and all the other excellences of Him who confers it. It is such as, in dispensing it, he will be known to be God. What he says of some works of his providence, may, in a much higher degree, be said of this great effect of his grace, 'Be still, and know that I am God.' It is not like that narrow, difficult, muzzled forgiveness that is found among men, if any such thing is to be found among them.

It is full, free, boundless, bottomless, absolute, as becomes God's nature and excellency. When *He* pardons, he abundantly pardons. Go with your conditional pardons, your reserves and limitations, to the sons of men. It may be they may become *them*, for they are like themselves. That of God is absolute and perfect, before which our sins evanish as a cloud before the east wind and the rising sun."

2. *A favourable change of character.*

In the second place, this change of *state* is necessarily accompanied by a change of *character*. Salvation from guilt necessarily infers salvation from depravity. The peculiar love of God to a being like man cannot be manifested without the communication of sanctifying influence. Do you think God could complacentially love a man without making him holy? If you do, you neither know what God is, nor what man is. The favour and the image of God are conjoined. The new man is "created in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness." The truth, by the faith of which men's state is changed—*i. e.*, by which they are justified—is the very same by which the Holy Spirit changes their character—*i. e.*, sanctifies them. Ultimate, complete, perfect holiness is secured by this forgiveness of sins. Immediately, on his forgiving men their iniquity—or rather, in forgiving their iniquity—"God puts his law in their inward parts, and writes it on their heart," and makes them "walk in his statutes, and keep his ordinances, and do them." He gives them "a new mind," "a right heart," a mind to know him, a heart to love and enjoy him. From being darkness they become "light in the Lord." Sin henceforth has no more dominion over them; and, though there is a struggle, while here below, between the flesh and the spirit, final complete victory is absolutely certain. The body of sin shall be destroyed; the connection between human nature, and "sin dwelling in it," shall be entirely and finally dissolved at death; the spirit of the just man shall be made perfect; and, through-

out the ages of eternity, in a glorious body like unto Christ's glorious body—fit mansion of such a spirit—he shall be like God, seeing Him as He is—holy as He is holy—saved, completely saved, from the influence of depravity.

3. *A favourable change of condition.*

In the third place, these saving changes of *state* and *character*, as they are intimately connected with each other, are alike closely connected with a saving change of *condition*. As misery was the concomitant and consequence of guilt and depravity, so salvation from misery—happiness—is the concomitant and consequence of salvation from guilt and depravity—that is, of forgiveness and sanctification. He who is saved, in the sense of being forgiven, in the degree in which he realises his true situation in his own consciousness, is saved, too, in the sense of being made happy, inasmuch as he is delivered from the painful sense of the Divine displeasure, and the spirit-embondaging fear of its dreadful consequences in a future world; and not only so, but he joys in God, having received the reconciliation; and rejoices in the hope of His glory—His complete approbation. He who is saved, in the sense of being sanctified, in the degree of his sanctification, is saved in the sense of being made happy, inasmuch as he is freed from the pangs of self-condemnation, and enjoys the satisfactions of a conscience void of offence towards God and man. The tyranny of the powers of evil is broken. Satan no longer carries him captive at his will. The prey is taken from the mighty; and though, for a season, for wise and holy reasons, the saved are exposed to the assaults of their enemy the devil, it is secured that, ere long, he shall be completely bruised under their feet. From the experience of the afflictions of life, the consequences of sin, the saved are not in the present state delivered, but the nature of these afflictions is changed to them. From penal inflictions they become paternal chastisements, and, in the hand of the good Spirit,

most powerful means for mortifying sin and perfecting holiness; and, when they have served their purpose, they shall cease to exist. In the state in which salvation is fully to unfold itself, the saved "shall hunger no more, they shall thirst no more," there shall be no more disease, or pain, or disappointment, or sorrow. All tears shall be wiped from their eyes for ever. To death, too, the saved must also submit, but to them death is unstinged. It is but the appointed way of introducing the spiritual part of their nature into a state of complete salvation from sin and all positive suffering, and of consigning the material part to a series of changes, which, however revolting to our natural feelings, is to end in its complete salvation—"the adoption, the redemption, of the body."

The full development of salvation takes place in the celestial state. There "the people saved of the Lord" shall be delivered both from moral and from physical evil, in all their forms and degrees, and the ever-expanding capacities of their glorified natures for sensuous, intellectual, emotional, moral, spiritual, religious, social, improvement and enjoyment, shall be filled to an overflow for ever. The curse and its consequences shall be as if they had never been; or rather, through the devices of the manifold wisdom, and the working of the all-subduing power, of God, under the influence of the great love wherewith he has loved his chosen ones, they shall be raised to a state of holiness and happiness, bearing, in its superiority to that which might have been enjoyed in Eden, some proportion to the immeasurable difference there is between him who lost paradise, and him who won heaven—between the first man, who was of the earth, earthy, and the second man—the Lord, who is from heaven.

This is salvation. Even in this world this salvation is enjoyed. "Ye *are* saved," says the apostle to the believing Corinthians. Not only ye shall be saved—ye are as sure of salvation as if you had it—but you have it in its essential

elements. What he says of them is equally true of all believers in all ages. They have the fundamental blessing of the forgiveness of sin in absolute completeness already. Their sins are as fully, as irreversibly, forgiven as they ever can be. Everything future in reference to this is but the fuller manifestation of what already is. Of the blessings of salvation as to character and condition, they are already put into partial possession; they are every day enjoying more of them; and the period is fast approaching, when, in reference to them, that which is perfect shall come, and that which is in part shall pass away.

Yet a little while, in the reckoning of eternity, according to the estimate of Him with whom a thousand years are as one day, though ages on ages, as we on earth count duration, may have to elapse ere the blessed consummation arrive, there shall be seen with the Lamb once slain, on the heavenly Mount Zion, more than a hundred forty and four thousand, even the whole collected family of the redeemed from all the families of the earth, every kindred, people, tongue, and nation, among a multitude that no man can number, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and singing the ever new song, "Salvation to our God and the Lamb for ever and ever." They have fulness of joy; and from the river of pleasure in God's presence "they drink their fill of pure, immortal streams." Among these nations of the saved, peopling a region to which our world, with its numerous islands and spacious continents, is but a little spot, there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for there shall be no more curse, and that because there shall be no more sin. This is to be *saved*—this is "the salvation that is in Christ, with eternal glory."

(2.) *The influence of the Gospel on the attainment of salvation.*

It now only remains here that we inquire, What is the influence of the Gospel on the attainment of this salvation?

"Ye shall be *saved*," thus saved, "by the Gospel which I preached to you, which ye have received, and wherein ye stand." It is plain that the Gospel and salvation are very closely connected. The question is—How? God is the first cause of salvation, as he is of all beings and of all events. Christ, by his atonement, is the meritorious procurer of salvation. The Holy Spirit is the effectual communicator of salvation. The Gospel is the external, and faith the internal, means of obtaining this salvation. The Gospel, believed and held fast, is the means by which the Holy Spirit puts men in possession of the great salvation which originates in the grace of the Divine Father, and has been accomplished through the mediation of the Divine Son. It may serve to good purpose to show, in a few words, that it is by the Gospel that we obtain salvation, in all the various shades of meaning which we have seen belong to that very comprehensive word, and how it is so.

1. *How the Gospel saves from guilt.*

In the first place we remark, it is by the Gospel that we are saved from guilt. The forgiveness of sin and justification are often, in the New Testament, represented as connected with faith, or belief of the Gospel, and with repentance, or that change of mind which is produced by the faith of the Gospel. We are justified by faith. Whosoever believeth shall be "justified from all things." "Repent," "that your sins may be blotted out."[1] Now, it is not believing *any* thing—it is the faith of the Gospel—which is connected with the forgiveness of sins and justification. And it is not the Gospel abstractly considered, that is connected with forgiveness and justification: it is the Gospel believed, the Gospel received as true, and received as true on the Divine testimony. And it is not every change of mind that is connected with the blotting out of sin; it is the change of

[1] Rom. v. 1. Acts xiii. 39; iii. 19.

mind which the faith of the Gospel produces, or rather implies. Wherever the Gospel is thus believed there is salvation, immediate, complete salvation from guilt and condemnation. "He that believeth is not condemned"—"He that believeth shall never come into condemnation;"[1] and this forgiveness and justification being the fundamental blessing of the christian salvation, which is indissolubly connected with all the rest, the Gospel believed, which introduces the sinner into the possession of this blessing, may be considered as interesting him in the christian salvation, in all its extent; and hence, of every believer of the Gospel it may be said, he shall never perish, he shall have everlasting life; nay, it may be said, "he has everlasting life."

2. *How the Gospel saves from depravity.*

Then, in the second place, we remark, that it is by the Gospel, received and retained, that we are saved from depravity—we are "transformed by the renewing of the mind," and thus experimentally "prove," in our temper and behaviour, "what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." We are saved from ignorance and error about God by the Gospel. It contains the truth about God; and we cannot understand and believe it, without, in the degree we do so, being delivered from those evils. We are saved from alienation from, and dislike of, God by the Gospel. We cannot really believe it without supremely loving Him, as supremely amiable and infinitely kind. The Gospel is a revelation of the mind and will of God; and when believed, that mind and will becomes ours; and as depravity consists in thinking and willing opposite to God, holiness consists in thinking and willing in conformity to God. It is the Gospel, understood and believed, that presents the most powerful motives to avoid sin and perform duty. The exceeding great and precious promises, when believed, are the effectual

[1] John iii. 19.

means of making men partakers of a divine nature, and of enabling them to escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. It is the revelation of "the grace of God bringing salvation to all men"—and what is that but the Gospel?—that effectually teaches those who believe it "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearance of him who is the great God and our Saviour, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."[1] Hence, the apostle represents the truth delivered to us as the mould into which, on believing, the man is cast, and thus becomes a new creature.[2] There is no being saved from depravity but by the Gospel. The law, with all its precepts and threatenings, cannot effect this; and the measure of a man's holiness is just, in other words, the measure of influence which the Gospel, understood and believed, exercises over his mind and conduct.

3. *How the Gospel saves from misery.*

Still farther, I observe in the third place, that it is by the Gospel that we are saved from misery. In saving from guilt and depravity, the Gospel saves from misery. The unforgiven, unsanctified man cannot but be miserable. The forgiven, sanctified man must, just because he is forgiven and sanctified, be happy. There is joy and peace in believing. "Being justified by faith"—that is, by believing the Gospel—"we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus;" "we have also free access" to God; "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God; we joy in tribulation; we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus does the Gospel even now save us; and holding it fast, yielding ourselves to its influence, we shall ultimately be completely and for ever

[1] 2 Pet. i. 4. Tit. ii. 11-14.

[2] Rom. vi. 17.

saved from evil in all its forms and degrees. So well does it deserve the appellation, 'the Gospel of our salvation;' as it reveals the way of salvation, communicates the blessings of salvation partially in the present state, and conducts us to the full and eternal enjoyment of them in a future state.

The apostle adds a short clause, limiting this declaration "ye are saved by the Gospel"—"unless ye have believed in vain,"[1]—with shortly adverting to which, I shall shut up my illustrations of this most important passage of Scripture.

The word "in vain" may signify either 'without ground,' or 'to no purpose.' It has been asked, Can the Gospel be believed in vain in either of these senses? If by believing the Gospel be meant, the counting it true on its appropriate evidence—the testimony of God distinctly perceived by an enlightened mind—we unhesitatingly reply in the negative. Wherever the Gospel is *thus* believed, it is believed on the best ground; and it will certainly work effectually in all who thus believe it. But it must be the *Gospel* that is the object of the mind; and the state of mind must be *believing*. Some have supposed that *believe* is here used as equivalent to 'make a profession of faith'—'unless you have professed to believe the Gospel without sufficient ground.' It is quite certain that men may profess to believe the Gospel—ay, and continue in that profession all their lives—and yet not be saved by the Gospel which they profess to believe. Instead of being saved by their profession, that profession, being a false one, will be an additional ground of condemnation. This, however, is not the natural meaning of the words. I apprehend we find the interpretation of this phrase in the 17th verse of this chapter. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain." The term rendered "vain" there, is not, indeed, the same word as that in the text; but it is one of similar import. The meaning there is, 'If Christ be not raised, you have believed a lie.' In like manner, when the apostle

[1] "Croire en vain, c'est croire des choses fausses, ver. 14 et 17."—L'ENFANT ET BEAUSOBRE.

says, "If ye have not believed in vain"—which seems just equivalent to, 'If your faith be not vain'—he probably meant to say, 'It is not everything that men call the Gospel'—(for he speaks elsewhere of another gospel, which is not another *gospel*)—'which, if perseveringly believed, will assuredly save.' It is only the Gospel which he had preached to them, the substance of which is, atonement made, salvation procured, by the death of Jesus Christ—and this glorious truth proved by his resurrection from the dead. Believe what men may, if they believe not this, the true Gospel, they shall not be *saved*—they shall be *damned*. It must be the Gospel that you believe, if you would be saved; and you must believe this Gospel, not merely profess to believe it, if you would be saved *by it*. If you do really believe the Gospel, and hold it fast—and holding it fast is the only permanent proof you can have that you really believe it—then most assuredly you shall be saved, saved by this Gospel.[1]

I have thus briefly illustrated the Gospel as stated by the apostle. The right way of preaching the Gospel, as exemplified by him—the duty of those to whom the Gospel is preached, as enjoined on, and performed by, the Corinthian believers—and the blessed result of the Gospel to individuals where this duty is performed—have in succession come before our minds.

More important topics cannot be conceived—more important in themselves, more closely connected with our highest and most enduring interests. In your retirements I counsel

[1] ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ εἰκῇ ἐπιστεύσατε. "To believe in vain, according to the use of ancient languages, is to believe without just reason or authority, giving credit to idle reports as true and authentic. Thus Plutarch, speaking of some story which passed current, says, 'τοῦτο ἡμεῖς εἴπομεν ἔν τι τῶν εἰκῇ πεπιστευμένων.—*Symp.* i. 6. The Latins used 'credere frustra,' or 'temere,' in the same way:—

'Nunc temere insimulas: credendoque omnia frustra,
Ipsa vetas iram pondus habere tuam'—Ovid, *Amor.* ii. 7, 13.

There is another passage of the same poet where he uses the phrase in a manner very similar to the apostle here.

'Ille pio (si non temere hæc creduntur) in arvo
Inter honoratos excipietur avos.'—*Ad Liv. Aug.* l. 329."
—ALEXANDER.

you to review the subjects which have been considered. They require, and they deserve, to be most seriously pondered; and accompany your reflections with earnest prayer that, by the good Spirit who brings truth already known to remembrance, and who leads into all truth necessary to be known in order to salvation, you may be enabled to turn what has been said to its proper account. The truth cannot be brought before the mind on such a subject without producing effects. If it be not a savour of life unto life, it must be a savour of death unto death. If it do not secure salvation, it will increase damnation. Oh, that it could be said with as much truth of all who hear the Gospel, "Ye have received the Gospel which has been preached to you; and ye stand in it," as it may be said of every one of them, 'If ye have not believed in vain, if ye have believed not some mere human system, but the divine Gospel, and hold it fast, you shall be saved by it.' Then they who have preached the Gospel will have good cause to say that they have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain;—and they who have believed the Gospel will have cause to say, 'Our faith is not in vain; we are not in our sins; the Gospel works effectually in us believing it, in saving us, making us holy and happy; its fruit is to holiness, and the end will be everlasting life.' Oh, that it may be so; that thus they who sow and they who reap may spend a happy eternity together, in the enjoyment of that salvation which the Gospel reveals and offers to all, and actually communicates to all who believe.

PART II.—THE DENIAL OF THE RESURRECTION INCONSISTENT WITH THE BELIEF OF THE GOSPEL.

1 CORINTHIANS xv. 12-19.—"Now, if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead

rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

THE main design of the apostle, in this chapter, is to confirm the faith of the Corinthian believers in the great doctrine of "the resurrection of the dead." The phrases—'resurrection,' and 'resurrection of the dead,' seem plainly to have had, among the Jews, a more extensive meaning than they have among us.[1] We consider them as descriptive only of the resuscitation of the body, which is to take place at the close of the present order of things: they included under them not only this, but the conscious state of the soul during the period of separate existence, between death and its reunion with the body, and the state of immortal, renewed embodied existence which is to succeed it. Paul states this doctrine of the resurrection when he says, "The body is dead"—must die—"because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness:" and "he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."[2] This seems plainly the meaning of 'resurrection,' when our Lord proves the existence of such a state from God saying to Moses at the bush, "I AM the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,"[3] long after their death; thus showing that, though dead, they were not perished,—though dead to men, they "lived to Him." And, in the discussion before us, the conclusions, that "they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished," and that Christians were "of all men most

[1] "Duæ hæ questiones, quarum altera est de *immortalitate animi humani*, altera de *restitutione corporis*, Judæis plerisque ita nexæ videbantur et copulatæ, ut ne cogitatione quidem alteram ab altera secernerent sed pro una plane et eadem haberent. (*Vide* Dan. xii. 2; 2 Mac. vi. 26; vii. 9-23, 29, 36; xii. 43-45; Targ. Hierosolym.; Gen. xxxv. 34; Dassovii Diss. de sent. Jud. de res. mort.) Unde iisdem nominibus, vel Hebraicis תקומה, seu תחיית המתים vel Græcis ἀνάστασις seu ἔγερσις τῶν νεκρῶν comprehendere hoc utrumque consueverunt."—KNAPP.

[2] Rom. viii. 10, 11.

[3] Matt. xxii. 32.

miserable," on the supposition that "the dead rise not," will not hold, unless we consider the resurrection as including the immortal life as well as the restoration of the body: for if they who had "fallen asleep in Christ" were enjoying, and were to enjoy for ever, all the happiness a separate human spirit can enjoy, assuredly they could not with truth be said to have perished, nor could Christians, with such an eternity in reversion, be counted of all men most miserable, whatever afflictions they might be exposed to here, and though never more, after the dissolution of the union between body and soul, to have their spirits connected with a material organisation. The denial of a resurrection with them, owing to the circumstances just stated, meant much more than it does with us. It was substantially a denial of a future life—the holding that death was the end of man.[1] This opinion was held by the Sadducees among the Jewish sects, and by some among the schools of the Grecian philosophy. It is probable that persons belonging to the former —it is certain that persons belonging to the latter class— were to be found at Corinth.

The object of the apostle is not to argue the matter with either of these classes of deniers of a future life. His business is with "some" professed believers, who most incongruously had attempted to conjoin the denial of a future life with the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. "Some of *you*," says the apostle, "say that there is no resurrection of the dead."

Even in dealing with these, it plainly is not so much his object to bring forward the whole evidence in support of the doctrines of the resurrection and immortality, as to show their extreme inconsistency in holding these views along with a professed belief of the Gospel, and to expose the

[1] The opinion is strikingly expressed by Pliny, when he represents it as equally impossible for God to destroy himself, and "mortales æternitate donare, et in vitam revocare defunctos."—*Hist. Nat.* ii. 7. In another passage, vii. 56, he pronounces it "dementia" to expect "iterari vitam morte."

extreme futility of the objections by which they had allowed their faith to be shaken almost to dissolution.

It also deserves to be remarked, that the whole of the apostle's statements and reasonings refer solely to the resurrection of the just,[1]—of "those who are Christ's," who stand to him in a relation similar to that in which all men stand to Adam,—the family of which Jesus is the elder brother, the first-born,—the full harvest, of which he is the first-fruits: not that Paul means to deny, what he elsewhere so explicitly affirms, that "there shall be a resurrection of the unjust as well as the just," nor that some of his arguments have not a bearing on that resurrection to condemnation as well as the resurrection to life; but that the subject of his discourse being the resurrection to life, as a glorious privilege secured by Christ to all his people, did not naturally lead him to speak of the resurrection to condemnation, which forms an important part of the just retributive punishment that awaits the impenitent and unbelieving.[2]

In the paragraph which precedes the subject of this section, and which has already at some length been explained, the apostle lays the foundation for the statements,

[1] "The apostle, as is evident from the whole scope of the chapter, and generally allowed by learned men, speaks only of the resurrection of the just."—ALEXANDER. "ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν hic est תחיה resurrectio beata."—GROTIUS. It is not in this place only that the apostle calls the resurrection of the just by the general name—"the resurrection of the dead,"—Phil. iii. 11. Our Lord speaks of the resurrection of the just in the same general terms, Matt. xxii. 30; Luke xx. 35. "Resurrectio justorum Judæis sæpe ἀνάστασις simpliciter appellatur."—KNAPP.

[2] "The wicked are excluded from these passages (1 Cor. xv.; 1 Thess. iv.), not because they will not rise at the same time with the righteous, but because they will not rise on the same principle: they will not rise as represented by, and entitled to life in, Christ. When he said to his disciples, 'Because I live, ye shall live also,' he enunciated a principle under which the wicked do not stand, and spoke of a life which they will never taste. The character of that life, the grounds of it, and the subjects of it, are all restrictive."—DAVID BROWN. This is an extract from Mr Brown's "Christ's Second Coming: Is it Pre-Millennial?" a work distinguished by extensive research, sound sense, deep piety, and a spirit at once scholarly, gentlemanly, and christian. Some of the Jews held that the ἀνάστασις is confined to the righteous, and quote Psal. i. 5 in favour of their view. It seems likely that it was in reference to these that Paul, Acts xxiv. 15, speaks of the ἀνάστασις ἀδίκων, as well as δικαίων.

...enings, and expostulations which occupy the rest of the chapter, by declaring that the fundamental article of the Gospel is, that Jesus Christ, who died as an expiatory victim for the sins of men, having been buried, rose from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures; that this fact had been most satisfactorily attested; that the truth and its evidence on this subject had been repeatedly presented to them by him in his preaching; that they had professed to believe his testimony, and continued in that profession; and that their salvation, in all the extent of meaning that belongs to that comprehensive word, was secure, if they really believed, and persevered in believing, this truth.

Proceeding on these principles, he goes on to ask, in the 12th verse, "Now, if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" The words, "*if* Christ be preached that he rose from the dead," do not intimate any doubt, but are equivalent to, 'Since, then, Christ is preached that he rose from the dead.' Indeed, they seem to be intended to reduplicate on the whole statement which had just been made. 'Since Christ has been preached to you as having died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as having been buried' (we see now why his burial was so particularly noticed), 'and as having risen again on the third day, according to the Scriptures; since this statement has been attested by abundant and most satisfactory evidence; since you have professed to believe it, and continue in that profession; and since your salvation depends on your believing—continuing to believe—this truth,—how is it that some of *you*, who thus continue to profess faith in the resurrection of Christ, who had died as the expiatory victim for the sins of men, and been buried,—how [1] is it that some of *you* say that there is no resurrection of the dead?' [2]

[1] "πῶς—'How is it possible that,' &c. Rom. vi. 2, Gal. iv. 9."—DE WETTE.

[2] "οὐκ ἔστιν—'is a nonentity, a chimera.' Chap. vii. 9; Winer, § 59, 5."—DE WETTE. "οὐκ ἔστιν, *i. e.*, ἀδύνατός ἐστι."—GROTIUS.

Indeed, the thing is so strange, that some interpreters have denied that "among *you*" refers to the professed believers in Corinth, and have asserted that the reference is to the inhabitants of Corinth generally, including the Sadducean Jews and the Epicurean Greeks. But it is obvious the apostle proceeds to reason on the principle that the resurrection of Christ was admitted by the persons he speaks of. His argument could have no force with those who denied that fact. It is a strong, an invincible argument, to those who professed to believe it, but to them only. He who is moderately acquainted with church history,—indeed, he who looks attentively at what is called the christian world of our own times,—must be aware, that there is no doctrine, however clearly revealed in the Scriptures, which a prejudiced mind cannot, by false interpretation, contrive to deny, with some portion of plausibility, while professing all the while—and we do not say hypocritically, though certainly self-delusively—to be a christian believer. In the pulpits of protestant Germany are to be found, at this hour, men calling themselves, and called by others, christian ministers, who have no more faith in the resurrection of the dead than those to whom the apostle refers.[1] These probably belonged to the same class as Hymeneus and Philetus, spoken of by Paul in his Second Epistle to Timothy, "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and have overthrown the faith of some."[2] Following the mystic mode of interpretation, so common both among the Jewish doctors and a certain sect of the Grecian philosophers, they seem to have understood our

[1] Eckermann, Henke, Ammon, and many other of the German Rationalist divines, have endeavoured to explain away from the New Testament the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. They consider the statements in the New Testament as mere "accommodations" to the prevailing modes of thought and speech among the Jews. Knapp well remarks, that there is not the remotest hint that the words of the apostles were not to be understood literally, and that, if this mode of interpretation were adopted, nothing of the christian system would be left behind.

[2] 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.

Lord's declaration respecting a resurrection—of a change in the character or circumstances of men;[1] and this supposition affords a probable reason why the apostle does not appeal to the express declarations of our Lord,—such as "the hour is coming, when all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth,"—which they might say were true, if rightly interpreted, as referring to a spiritual resurrection, but fixes their attention on the undoubted, the admitted, fact of our Lord's resurrection, which was certainly a physical change, and asks them, 'How can you believe Christ's resurrection—how can you hope for salvation through that faith, and, at the same time, deny that there is a resurrection of the dead—a future life both of the soul and body?'

§ 1. *Deduction from the thesis, 'There is no resurrection' —'Christ is not risen.'*

Let us see how the apostle presses his argument, ver. 13, "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen." Men often embrace opinions without being aware of the consequences, either logical or moral, to which they lead. It is wrong, and fitted to serve no good purpose—it is fitted to serve many bad purposes,—to charge men with adopting such opinions, with their eyes open to these consequences, and still more to say they have adopted them because they draw such consequences after them, while they disavow all this; but it is quite a fair argument against an opinion, that it logically leads to absurd or impious conclusions, or that its moral tendencies are doubtful or mischievous; and if our opponent be honest, should we succeed in showing him that it does so, we are likely to induce him to

[1] Epiphanius (Hæres. 40) speaks of those who thought "ἀναστασιν οὐκ εἶναι σαρκὸς, ἀλλα μόνον ψυχῆς:" and Tertullian (de res. carn. 19) speaks of heretics who affirmed "resurrectionem eam esse, qua quis, audita veritate, redanimatus et revivificatus Deo, ignorantiæ morte discussa, velut de sepulchro eruperit."

re-consider the question, and prepare his mind for a candid examination of more direct evidence. Now, this is what the apostle does here. He shows that an intelligent denial of the resurrection of the dead could not consist with an intelligent admission of the resurrection of Christ; that he who denied the first, to be consistent must deny the second; and he then shows what are the fair logical conclusions, and what are the natural moral consequences, of denying one or both; and, as it were, bids them pause and consider whether they were ready to acquiesce in the one, and yield themselves to the other.

The words before us admit of being interpreted in two different ways, each bringing out a powerful argument. The apostle may proceed on the principle, that what "some among them" held was that there *could* be no resurrection —that the thing was impossible; or he may proceed on the principle, that they held merely that there certainly *should* be no resurrection—that the event, though it might not be impossible, yet certainly never should take place.

In the first case, the apostle's argument is, 'If there cannot be such a thing as a future life and resurrection, then, of course, Jesus Christ cannot have risen from the dead. What cannot be never has been, never will be. The impossibility of a resurrection equally discredits the history of Christ's resurrection, and the prediction of the resurrection of his people. To say that there *can* be no resurrection, and yet hold that Christ *has* risen from the dead, is plainly a contradiction. If this dogma is true, there must be some imposture or delusion in the common faith of Christians.' It was the common opinion, both of the Sadducees and the Epicureans, that the resurrection was impossible, in the nature of things. Now, says the apostle, 'If you hold this principle, you necessarily renounce your faith in a fact so clearly proved as the resurrection of Christ,—are you prepared to do this?' There is an invincible argument against this tenet of the Sadducees and Epicureans in the statement

of our Lord, "Ye do err, not knowing the power of God;" [1] and in the unanswerable question of his apostle, "Why should it be thought an incredible thing that God should raise the dead?" [2] But the argument from fact, suggested by the words before us, is not less sound, and even more striking,—'Jesus Christ, a man, has risen from the dead; therefore other men may rise from the dead.'

In the second case, the apostle's argument is, 'Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and rose again from the dead, according to the Scriptures; thus giving evidence that his death had served its purpose of expiating sins, and, therefore, delivering those in whose stead he stood from the consequences of sin,—among the rest, continued subjection to the dominion of death. If, then, you hold that men are not to be delivered from this consequence of sin, you in effect deny the resurrection of Christ as having died for our sins—for he could not have risen, if his death had not secured resurrection to all who are in him, as all were in Adam,—are you prepared to give up with the fact which proves the efficacy of the death of Christ? To be consistent, you must do so, if you deny that which is a necessary consequence of it.' [3]

[1] Matt. xxii. 29. [2] Acts xxvi. 8.

[3] "The conclusion here does not rest upon the principle 'sublato genere tollitur et species,' as Grotius, Meyer, Knapp, and Rucker suppose,—nor on the similarity of being, in Christ and men, as Theodoret, Billroth, and Usteri think,—but upon this (verse 20, &c.), that Christ, by his resurrection, had made a commencement of the resurrection of the dead, and that the latter is a necessary consequence of the former, according to Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Calvin. Against the last mode of inference the objection may indeed be made, that from the ἀνάστ. νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν it does not follow that Jesus is not risen, but simply that, on that hypothesis, his resurrection has not answered its purpose; but this objection can only be made by one who overlooks that, according to the apostle, the connection of the resurrection of Christ with the general resurrection is founded on the Divine arrangement of the world, just as the death of all men is connected with the death of Adam, and has for him the validity of an axiom."—De Wette. "Τὸ μὲν τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ ἐγερθέντος, μηδὲ ἄλλους ἐγείρεσθαι, ἀκόλουθον· τὸ δὲ εἰ ἄλλοι μὴ ἐγερθείεν, μηδὲ τοῦτον ἐγηγέρθαι, πῶς ἂν ἴσχοι λόγον τινά; ἐπεὶ οὖν τοῦτο τὸ σφόδρα ἐδόκει λογον ἔχειν, ὅρα πῶς ἐργαζεται αὐτὸ σφοδρῶς, ἄνωθεν τὰ σπέρματα προκαταβαλλων ἀπ' αὐτῆς τοῦ κηρύγματος τῆς ὑποθεσεως, οἷον ὅτι ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ἀποθανὼν ἐγήγερται καὶ ὅτι ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων ἐστίν, ἡ γαρ ἀπαρχὴ, τίνος ἂν εἴη ἀπαρχὴ, εἰ μὴ τῶν ἐγειρομένων; πῶς δὲν εἴη απαρχὴ, οὐκ

§ 2. *Deductions from the thesis, 'Christ is not risen.'*

But the apostle is not contented with showing that those who deny the resurrection of the dead, to be consistent, must deny the resurrection of Christ. He goes on to show what consequences would follow from denying the resurrection of Christ,—"And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain,[1] and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be[2] that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."[3]

The apostle mentions two consequences which must result from there being no resurrection of the dead—two consequences which ought well to be considered by those "some" among the Corinthians who said that there was no resurrection: the first, that the apostle's preaching was vain; the second, that their professed faith was vain. He then proceeds to illustrate these in their order. First, "Our

ἐγειρομένων ἐκείνων ὧν ἐστιν ἀπαρχή; πῶς οὖν οὐκ ἐγείρονται; εἰ δὲ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, διὰ τί ἐγέρθη ὁ Χριστός;"—CHRYSOSTOM. "Quia Christus non nisi nostra causa resurgere debuit, nulla ejus resurrectio foret, si nobis nihil prodesset."—CALVIN. "May not Calvin have used the word 'nulla' here, in the sense of our 'null,' 'void,' 'useless'? In that case his assertion would be, that as the only object Christ had in rising from the dead was to secure our resurrection, so, if we rise not, then his resurrection becomes null—loses its object. This seems to me, after all, to be the apostle's meaning. He is arguing *ex absurdo*, by showing that the opinion he is confuting leads necessarily to a conclusion which is impossible and foolish."—Dr W. L. ALEXANDER. This is very ingenious, and substantially just; but Calvin's *nulla* is just *no*, and the absurdity involved is—what was opposed to the strongest evidence—that Christ had not risen.

[1] "Vocabula κενὸς, μάταιος, μάτην, εἰς μάτην, εἰς κενὸν, εἰκῇ, a Græcis interpretibus V. T. usurpantur promiscue."—KNAPP.

[2] "In this place certainly ἄρα is not a conclusive particle, but an expression of astonishment, which is the original signification of the word."—OLSHAUSEN.

[3] 1 Cor. xv. 14-19.

preaching is vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised." Secondly, "Your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Such is the construction and logical division of these verses. Let us now examine a little more closely into their meaning.

(1.) *The apostles' preaching was vain.*

"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." There is some difficulty in fixing the precise meaning of these words, for both "preaching" and "faith" may be understood in two different senses; and "vain" is a word which admits of more than one meaning. "Preaching" may either mean, the thing preached —that Christ had risen from the dead,—or the preaching of that thing—the declaration of it. "Faith" may either mean the thing believed—which is the same thing as the thing preached, that Christ had risen from the dead,—or it may mean the believing of that thing.

Supposing that both "preaching" and "faith" were to be understood in the last sense—the act of the apostle's preaching, and the act of the Corinthians' believing,—then the meaning is, 'Our preaching is a vain thing, for it proceeds on no sufficient foundation, and, proceeding on no sufficient foundation, it can serve no important purpose. If Christ be not risen, we have been acting like fools, and all we have been doing *can* serve no good or important purpose. Can you believe this? If you *cannot*, you must give up with your dogma that there is no resurrection of the dead. If Christ be not risen, you have been acting like fools, and your believing can serve no good, no important, purpose. Are you ready to admit this? If not, you must

no longer say that there is no resurrection of the dead; for if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen, and, in that case, our preaching and your believing are equally without solid foundation, and without important effects. It had been better we had not preached, and that you had not believed.'

This is very good sense; but still I think there is enough to show that the apostles' preaching means here what the apostles preached, and that the Corinthians' faith means what the Corinthians believed. In that case, "in vain" means false: 'Our preaching is vain, your faith is vain. We have preached and you have believed a *lie*.[1] Are you ready to admit this? This is what you must admit, if you hold that there is no resurrection of the dead. First, you must hold that what we preached to you is not true. You must hold that we, who have given ourselves out as "witnesses chosen before of God," "commanded by Him to preach unto the people, and to testify that God raised up Jesus, and that it is he who is ordained of God to be judge of the quick and the dead," have either been imposed on by the fraud of others, or by our own imaginations, or have fraudulently sought to impose on others; for, in the case supposed, we have given a false testimony respecting God.[2] We have said that He raised up Christ, whom, on your hypothesis, He did not raise up; for nothing is plainer, than that if the dead cannot rise, Christ, who was dead, is not risen; or if the dead are not to rise, then Christ's resurrection, which, in the circumstances of the case, must have secured their resurrection, cannot have taken place. Now, are you ready to take this ground? Can you bring yourselves to believe that I and all my apostolic brethren were mistaken, and that we did not see the Lord, but merely dreamt it? Can you really

[1] "Κενὰ ἐκηρύξαμεν ἡμεῖς, καὶ ὑμεῖς δὲ κενὰ ἐπιστεύσατε."—THEOPHYLACT.

[2] "κατὰ Θεοῦ, most interpret 'against God,' Matt. xxvi. 29, because against the truth. It is better to interpret it, with Raphelius, 'of God.'"—DE WETTE. "Κατὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ est περὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ."—WAKEFIELD.

suppose each and all of us so entirely bereft of discourse of reason as to think we saw what we did not see, heard what we did not hear, touched what we did not touch? Can you really account for what we say respecting the resurrection of Christ on the supposition that we were imposed on by our own imaginations?—or can you believe that we are impostors? What object could we have in view in telling a lie? What have we made of it?—what are we likely to make of it in this world?—and what are we likely to make of it in the next? Did you ever see any signs of a disposition to impose on you in me, or in my fellow-apostles? Have we not manifestly "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, not handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God"? Was "our exhortation of deceit or of uncleanness, or in guile"? "Used we at any times flattering words, or a cloak of covetousness? Sought we glory of men?" "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, we behaved ourselves among you that believe." Do you really think we told you a lie when we said, Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, rose again from the dead? Besides, "If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. The seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord." "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."[1] Have not you yourselves many of you been the subjects of a miraculous agency connected with the preaching and the believing of this doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? Has not "God borne witness to our testimony respecting the resurrection of his Son, by signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his will?" Is our preaching then vain? Have we told you a lie?" Did ever men contrive such a lie?

[1] 1 Thess. ii. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 2; xii. 12.

Did ever God give countenance to any lie? Reflect, consider. Surely you cannot considerately hold a principle that lands you in such conclusions as these? And in these conclusions the principle that there is no resurrection does inevitably land you; "for if the dead rise not, Christ has not risen; and if Christ be not risen," then we are either deluded enthusiasts or fraudulent impostors; and are you prepared to pronounce us either? This is the import of "our preaching is vain."

(2.) *The faith of Christians is vain.*

The second conclusion to which this assertion necessarily conducts is, "your faith is vain:" "and," or moreover, "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain," *i. e.*, 'what you have believed is not true. Are you ready to admit this, that you have been dupes and fools? If you are, you must have made up your minds to abandon the cause of Christ. If so, why do you continue to call yourselves by his name?'

1. *They are yet in their sins.*

But this is the least of it; for consider how matters stand if your faith be vain—if you have indeed believed a lie when you believed that Christ, having died for our sins, had risen again for our justification. In receiving this you supposed that you had obtained "redemption, even the forgiveness of sins," "justification through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." But if Christ be not risen—and without doubt he is not risen if there be no resurrection of the dead—then there has been no expiation made, no pardon obtained for men: "ye are yet in your sins"[1]—the curse is unrepealed—the power of sin is unbroken—ye are guilty, depraved, condemned, enslaved, helpless, hopeless—"the wrath of God abideth on you"—no atoning blood has flowed for you, no availing in-

[1] "ὑφ' ἁμαρτίαν. Rom. iii. 9. The inference rests on the inseparability of the resurrection of Christ and his atoning death, and, in general, on the inseparability of all the parts in the work of salvation."—DE WETTE.

tercession rises for you—no transforming, guiding, comforting Spirit is shed forth on you. In believing our preaching, you supposed that you were "washed, and sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God;" but if Christ be not risen, and you have believed a lie in believing this, it has been all fatal delusion, a pleasing, but a deadly dream. The power of sin to condemn and to deprave is unbroken, and there is no hope of its ever being broken. Surely you should have better grounds than the speculations of Sadducees and Epicureans before adopting a principle leading to such desolating conclusions, despoiling you of righteousness and peace, hope and holiness, and placing them beyond your reach for ever.

2. *They who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.*

A second consequence which follows from their faith being vain—from the two closely connected propositions, 'Christ has risen,' and 'the dead shall rise,' being untrue—is, "Then they also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished."[1] "They that have fallen asleep in Christ,"[2] are departed Christians, those who have died in the faith of the Gospel and in the hope of a glorious resurrection and a happy immortality. They are said not to die,[3] but to fall asleep, to indicate that their death is the close of their painful labours, and privations, and sorrows, and introduces them into a state of perfect repose—complete deliverance from suffering in all its forms; a state, however, which is but preparatory to a joyful awaking to higher enjoyments. They fall asleep "*in Christ*," connected with his person—a connection death does not dissolve. When they die, they are not separated from Christ; they go to be more intimately *with him* than ever.

[1] Grotius refers οἱ κ. ε. Χ. to the martyrs, but there is no ground for such a limitation. "From this clause, it appears the ἀνάστασις denied included the immortality of the soul."—Dr Lawson, MS. notes.

[2] οἱ κοιμηθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ here, are the same as οἱ ἐν Κυρίῳ ἀποθνήσκοντες, Rev. xiv. 13, and οἱ κοιμηθέντες διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ,—οἱ νεκροὶ ἐν Χριστῷ, 1 Thess. iv. 14, 17.

[3] ——"Θνήσκειν μὴ λέγ τοὺς ἀγαθούς."—Callimachus, ap. Mali Obss. Sacr. iv.

It is this which makes to depart "so very much far better."[1] When absent from the body, they become more present with the Lord than they ever were. They departed in peace and joy, like Stephen, who fell asleep saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," "looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of their great God and Saviour"—"looking for the Saviour from heaven, who should change their vile bodies, and fashion it like to his own glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself"—dying to the Lord as they had lived to the Lord, dying in Christ. If Christ be not risen, and therefore there be no resurrection of the dead, what is become of them? The best that can be said of them is, they are as if they had never been. That is their state according to those who hold that there is no future state, no resurrection, no immortality. That is deplorable enough; but if Christ be not risen, that is but the half of their misery, not the half of their misery. Notwithstanding the vain imaginations of the Jewish Sadducees and Greek Sophists, there is a future state. But if Christ be not risen, what must that future state be to all the children of men? If he be not risen, there has no expiation been made. 'Ye are living in your sins; and they have died in their sins. They have gone down unforgiven, unsanctified, into the nether parts of the earth; they have "gone down to hell with their iniquities upon their bones," and their misery is all the greater that they thought they had been forgiven, and justified, and sanctified, and saved in him who, they thought, had been "given for their offences, and raised again for their justification." Are you prepared to admit this? Do you not start back when you see the shadows which the faith of Christ's resurrection, and that of his people, had chased away, settling down in tenfold blackness, and say, We must have better evidence than any yet offered us before we cast away our hope in reference to our

[1] πολλῷ μᾶλλον κρεῖττον. Phil. i. 23.

departed friends, and sit down abandoning ourselves to sorrow, mourning as those who have no hope?'

3. *Christians are of all men most miserable.*

A third conclusion to which the denial of the resurrection of Christ, and of his people, involved in the Corinthians' faith on these subjects being vain, is, that Christians are the most pitiable of all mankind. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, then are we of all men most miserable." These words admit of different shades of interpretation, according as the clauses are considered as hanging on each other.

Some connect the clause "in this life" with "in Christ," which brings out this meaning,—'If we had no hope beyond what Christ in this life has accomplished for his followers, did we hope in him, not as living and reigning in the other world, that world to which the resurrection belongs, but only as having lived in this world, as must be the case if he be not risen from the dead, we should be miserable indeed.' It is much more natural, however, to connect "in this life" with "we have hope," considering it as descriptive, not of Christ's mortal life, but of the Christian's mortal life. If our hopes "in Christ," as Christians, were limited to this world—if they terminated at, were lost in, death—then we should be very much to be pitied.

It has been doubted, also, whether the word "*only*" refers to "Christ," or "to this life." In the first case, the meaning is, 'If in this life we have hope in Christ alone,'—and this is the description of true Christians, for he "is our hope"[1]—'on the supposition that he has not risen, and that, of course, his promise that we are to rise cannot be fulfilled, what wretched creatures are we? Were ever men so miserably duped? Did ever any impostor so sadly delude his followers? To forsake all for him, and get nothing! To

[1] 1 Thess. iv. 13.

cherish such high hopes, only to end in such complete disappointment! We perilled all, and we have lost all. Our hope was all in him; and he and it lie buried in a grave never to become empty by a resurrection.' In the second, the meaning is, 'If our hopes in Christ were confined to this life, did not reach to the life to come—if we, as Christians, had hope only as to blessings to be enjoyed in this world—which must be the case, if we give up with the doctrine of his resurrection and our own—then, indeed, we were much to be pitied; in some respects, we might be reckoned more miserable than any class of men.' Upon the whole, we prefer the last mode of interpretation, as the more natural and simple of the two.

Christians were told by their Lord, that, if they would be his disciples, they must "deny themselves, take up the cross, and follow him"—that "in the world" they should "have tribulation." His disciples taught that they who would "live godly" must "suffer persecution"—and that "through much tribulation" they must "enter into the kingdom;"[1] and experience soon proved that these honest declarations were in no respect exaggerated. What is said primarily of the Maccabean confessors, was to the letter true of many of the primitive Christians. They "had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented:" "they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."[2] What is said of the apostles is applicable to many of their followers,—"Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place;" "reviled, and persecuted, and defamed, troubled on every side, perplexed, cast down," "we are made

[1] Matt. xvi. 24. John xvi. 33. 2 Tim. iii. 12. Acts xiv. 22.
[2] Heb. xi. 36, 37.

as the filth of the world,"[1] and "the offscouring of all things."[1]

Under all this they were not miserable; they were far happier than their persecutors, often possessed of all the world could give them of wealth, and honour, and sensual delight. They gloried in their tribulations; "as the sufferings of Christ abounded in them"—*i. e.*, their sufferings for Christ—"their consolation also abounded by Christ." What a picture of happiness do the apostles exhibit when, after being imprisoned, straitly threatened by the Sanhedrim, they lift up together with one accord the lofty hymn, recorded Acts iv. 24, &c.; and Paul and Silas were fully as appropriate objects of envy as of pity, when, in an inner dungeon, with bleeding backs, and their feet fast in the stocks, they prayed and sang praises to God.[2]

But this happiness rose primarily out of the fact, that their hope in Christ was not limited to this life. They "rejoiced in tribulation," because they "rejoiced in hope of the glory of God." They bore their afflictions with patience, and fortitude, and joy, because they were persuaded that "the sufferings of the present time were not worthy to be compared with the glory that was to be revealed in them;" and that "their light afflictions, which were but for a moment, would work out for them a far more exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory." They knew that "it was a faithful saying, that if they suffered with Christ," it was "that they might also be glorified together with him." They had, indeed, hope in Christ in this life,—they expected that he would take care of them, and sustain and strengthen them, and supply all their need; but even this hope rested on the faith of his resurrection,—that he yet lived, and lived a royal life, sitting on his Father's right hand, reigning along with him.

Take away from them the hopes rising out of the doctrines

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 11. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 9. [2] Acts xvi. 25.

of Christ's resurrection and their own, and you at once deprive them of the happiness that they thought was awaiting them, and of their present grand support under all their afflictions; you leave them suffering to a great extent because they are Christians, and you take away from them everything of a compensatory kind. Surely the Corinthians should consider well, ere they parted with a doctrine which alone could cause the choice they had made, as Christians, to appear a wise one—which alone could sustain them under the afflictions that choice had brought on them.

These statements are peculiarly applicable to the case of Christians at the time the epistle was written; but they contain a general truth,—that the adoption, in good faith, of the religion of Christ as our religion, and the following this fairly out, require a self-renunciation which is painful to flesh and blood, and often expose to privations and sacrifices, labours and sufferings, which might otherwise be avoided, and which the hope of a future state alone can render reasonable. It is justly remarked by Mr Scott, "It does not follow from this passage that Christians would in fact be more unhappy than other men, *if retaining their peculiar hopes*, though there should be in the event no future reward, for even then their hopes of heaven, and that consolation which is thence derived, would far more than counterbalance their peculiar trials, self-denials, and hardships; but if this hope and consolation were taken from them, which they would be by denying the doctrine of the resurrection, they would be indeed more miserable than other men,—having lost their relish for those vain pleasures which alone could be hoped for, and in which other men, with a measure of success, strive to forget their misery,—experiencing earnest desires which cannot be gratified, and enduring many peculiar evils without any peculiar support and consolation."

It may be proper to remark that the words admit of a somewhat different interpretation: 'If, in becoming Christians, we have expected to secure worldly prosperity, we are

wretched fools: nothing but the existence of a future life can make the course we have followed in placing our hope in Christ seem a reasonable one. If there be a future life, in placing our hope in Christ we have made every way a good bargain,—a good bargain as to this world as well as the next. But everything depends on there being such a future life, such a resurrection as the apostle preached.' In this case the apostle seems to follow out this thought in the 29th and following verses.

The force of the whole paragraph is, 'Can a doctrine, which I learn with surprise has some abettors among you, possibly be true, which leads to such consequences as these, —Christ is not risen from the dead; we have preached a lie to you; you have believed a lie; we are false witnesses; you are fools; your sin is unexpiated; you are yet the hopeless slaves of depravity; your dead christian friends are as if they had never been; and both we and you are the guiltiest, and the silliest, and the most wretched of mankind? Have I not reason to say, when I remember how plainly and frequently the truth of the Gospel respecting the resurrection of Christ—who had died for our sins and been buried —with its evidence, was preached by me, and how cordially it was received by you, and how to this good hour it has never been renounced by you, and what important results hang on your holding fast what you have received, even your salvation,—have I not reason to say, "*How* say some among *you*, that there is no resurrection of the dead?"'

This discussion is well fitted to impress on the mind the conviction, that the various portions of revealed truth are indissolubly connected together, and especially, that the resurrection of Christ is intimately interwoven with all that is most peculiar in the doctrines—all that is most conclusive in the evidence—of our holy faith.

Let us keep fast by the *facts* of Scripture, and let us be jealous of all human philosophising in reference to these facts. Let us shrink from every principle that requires us to deny or

explain away any one of these facts. Let us confidently believe the divinely-revealed facts; let us distrust the humanly-devised theories. These may be true,—the probability is, they are in some degree false. They are never necessary: their very highest praise is, that they *may* be useful. In experience, they have done far more harm than good. The warning of the apostle was not uncalled for,—oh, that it had been—oh, that it were—more attended to!—"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."[1]

Let us especially study the resurrection of Christ, that great fact, in all its bearings, both doctrinal and practical. Let us seek to know all its "power,"—its power to convince, its power to transform, its power to stimulate, its power to console, its power to pacify the conscience—to tranquillise the mind—to rejoice the heart, its power to annihilate doubt—to quell remorse—to animate hope—to sustain patience—to secure "a constant continuance in well-doing," the "being stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." In one word, let us reduce to practice the apostle's exhortation to Timothy,—"Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel."

PART III.—THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST SECURES THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE TO ALL HIS PEOPLE.

1 CORINTHIANS xv. 20-28.—"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that

[1] Col. ii. 8.

shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

§ 1. *Introductory expository remarks.*

The words with which this division of the chapter commences—"But now[1] *is* Christ risen,"—plainly look back to the words in the 17th verse—"If Christ *be* not risen." To put the Corinthian Christians on their guard against some among them, who said there was no resurrection, the apostle first shows them that that principle, followed to its fair consequences, was a denial of Christ's resurrection; for, if the dead rise not, Christ cannot have been raised; and then points out to them some of the startling conclusions to which the denial of Christ's resurrection necessarily leads,—"If Christ be not risen," the apostles' "preaching was *vain*." It rested on no solid foundation—it could serve no good purpose. That which they had preached was a lie, and they were "found false witnesses of God; because they testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." "If Christ be not risen," the faith of the Corinthians was vain. *It* rested on no solid foundation—it could serve no good purpose. That which they had believed was a *lie*. The apostles were wicked impostors, and they themselves were credulous fools. Farther, "If Christ were not risen, they were yet in their sins." No atoning sacrifice has been presented in their room, no transforming Spirit secured for their benefit. Their guilt is uncancelled; their fetters are unbroken; the doors of their prison-house are as fast locked as ever. They are unjustified, unsanctified, unredeemed. Yet farther, "If Christ be not risen," they who "are fallen asleep

[1] νυνὶ, the Attic form of νῦν, here does not refer to time, but is merely transitive and adversative, equivalent to *jam vero*.—Rom. 6. 22; vii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 11; vii. 14; xii. 20; xiv. 6.

in Christ are perished." They are either as if they had never been, or rather, having died in their sins, it had been better for them that they had never been born. And, finally, "If Christ be not risen," his followers have nothing to hope for from him, save in this life; and, when they reflect what he got in this life, and what they had gotten, and what they were likely to get in this life, in consequence of their connection with him, they may well be pronounced of all men most miserable. Such are the fair logical deductions from the principle—'Christ is not risen,'—itself a fair logical deduction from the principle 'that the dead rise not.' It surely became the Corinthians to pause and ponder well before they admitted a principle which necessarily led to conclusions like these. One would require to have strong evidence indeed to make such conclusions credible, contradictory, as they are, to his strongest convictions,—revolting to his most sacred feelings.

'But no,' says the apostle, 'none of these conclusions hold, for the assumed fact on which they proceed, that Christ has not risen, is a falsehood. "*If* Christ be not risen," then, without doubt, these inexplicable, absurd, and deplorable statements are true; "but now Christ is risen." If anything be certain, this is certain; if anything be proved, this is proved. Now Christ *is* risen; and it is as clearly demonstrated that all these statements are false, as it is obviously undesirable that they should be found true. "If Christ be risen," the apostles' preaching was not vain. They had told only the truth—the truth fully attested both by human and divine testimony. "If Christ be risen," the faith of the Corinthian believers was not vain. It was the very truth most sure which they had believed—no cunningly-devised fable; and of the hope which rested on it, they need be at no loss to be always ready to give in answer a most satisfactory reason to every one who asked them. If "Christ be risen," then they are "not in their sins." Guilt has been expiated—sanctification is secured. "There

is no condemnation to them, being in Christ Jesus," who, having been "delivered for their offences," was "raised again for their justification." "Sin shall not have dominion over them." "Of God," by Divine appointment, "they are in Christ Jesus;" as united to him ("who of God is made to them wisdom"), they are justified, sanctified, and redeemed. "If Christ be risen," then they who have fallen asleep in Christ are not perished. They are saved—saved in their Lord with an everlasting salvation. Their spirits live through the justification they have in him; and though their bodies are dead because of the sin of the first man, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will, in due season, quicken them on account of that Spirit, of which they are the dwelling-place. Absent from the body, their spirits are, even now, at home with the Lord; and yet a little while, in the reckoning of eternity, and with bodies fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, they shall, in their whole persons, be for ever with him. If Christ be risen, then they have hope in him, not only in this life,—they have hope in death—hope after death—they "look for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God their Saviour." They "know that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, they shall have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." They are "looking for the Saviour from heaven, who shall change their vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his own glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself;" and, notwithstanding all the privations and sacrifices, dangers and sufferings, to which their connection with Christ exposed them, they were of all men the most happy, instead of being of all men most miserable. They "joyed in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom they had received the reconciliation;" they even "gloried in their tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope,"

even a hope which "maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given unto them." Such is the import of the words, "But now Christ IS risen," viewed in contrast with the hypothetical statement, "If Christ be not risen," and the consequences which that hypothetical statement involves.

The conclusion, however, on which the apostle wished particularly to fix the attention of the Corinthians, is this, that as, if the dead rise not, then Christ is not raised, so, if Christ be risen, the dead shall rise. I have already stated that the resurrection of the dead, of which the apostle here treats, is the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in him—of them who are his; and have assigned my reasons for holding that, while the apostle does not deny the doctrine of a resurrection to condemnation—a doctrine plainly stated elsewhere in Scripture—he here treats only of the resurrection to life. "Christ is risen from the dead, and is[1] become the first fruits of them that sleep"—that sleep in him.

To understand the paragraph that follows, beginning with the 20th, and ending with the 28th verse, it is necessary to keep this in mind; and also to observe, that the object of the apostle is to explain to the Corinthian believers how closely, according to the great principles of the economy of salvation, the resurrection of Christ is connected with the resurrection of his people,—how completely the latter is secured by the former; to show them that, if they intelligently believe that Jesus died and rose again, they must also, in order to be consistent, believe that "them who sleep in Jesus God will bring" from the grave "with him."

The security which the resurrection of Christ gives for the resurrection of his people, as here unfolded, is twofold, arising both from its procuring and from its final cause. It

[1] *And* is a supplement, and ἐγήγερται is considered by Griesbach, Tittmann, Scholz, Lachmann, and Tischendorf, as an interpolation. The true reading seems to be—'Now Christ is risen, the first fruits of them who sleep.'

rests both on that which led to the resurrection of Christ, and on that to which the resurrection of Christ led.

It rests on what led to the resurrection, or on its procuring cause. Now, what was that? His becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, in the room of his people. As the sin of Adam produced his own death, and the death of all mankind who were in him, as their federal head, so the obedience unto death of Christ produced his own resurrection, and will produce the resurrection of all who are united to him as their federal head. This view of the subject is presented to us in verses 20, 21, 22, 23, and in the first clause of verse 24. "Christ *is* risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them who sleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end." [1]

But the security which the resurrection of Christ gives for the resurrection of his people, rests not only on its procuring, but also on its final, cause,—not only on what led to his resurrection, but on what his resurrection led to. And what is that? He rose to *reign*. "He both died and rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living." He has "all power in heaven and in earth" given to him, and given to him for the express purpose of subduing all the enemies of himself and his Father; and this secures the abolition of death—the destruction of that last enemy—in the glorious resurrection of all the people of Christ who have been subjected to his power. This view of the subject is presented to us in verses 24, 25, 26, 27,

[1] "τὸ τέλος. Finis resuscitationis omnis. Correlatum ἀπαρχῆς."—BENGEL. "Cum in voce ἀπαρχὴ non de initio rerum humanarum omnium sed de primitiis resurrectionis mortuorum cogitandum sit, sequitur inde, etiam vocem τέλος non de fine omnium rerum humanarum in hac terra, sed de consummatione restaurationis mortuorum intelligi debere; non supplendum est τοῦ κόσμου sed τῆς ἀναστάσεως, quod Lockius subindicare voluisse videtur et Bengelius, fere omnibus aliis interpretibus refragantibus, recte docuit."—KRAUSE.

28. "When he shall have delivered up"—or rather restored, brought back—"the kingdom to God, even the Father; when" (in order to this) "he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power," which is hostile to him and his Father. ("For," [read verse 25 as a parenthesis], "for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.") The 26th verse is the conclusion of the sentence begun in the 24th verse, and should be read without the unnecessary, and indeed obscuring, supplementary words *that* and *is*, marked, as you will observe, in italics,—"The last enemy shall be destroyed—death." [1]

The 27th and 28th verses are, I apprehend, introduced for the purpose of explaining the nature of that universal dominion, in the exercise of which the risen Saviour is to destroy all the enemies of his Father and of his people, and death as the last of them,—a dominion supreme and uncontrollable, so far as creatures are concerned; but still a dominion subordinate, so far as essential Deity is concerned, the dignities whereof, in the economy of salvation, are sustained by the Father. This, so far as I have been able to apprehend it, is the course of the apostle's argumentative illustration in the paragraph before us; and this imperfect analysis will, I trust, be found of some use in guiding us in our remarks on its various parts.

§ 2. *That which led to Christ's resurrection,—his vicarious death secures the resurrection of life to his people.*

Let us first, then, attend to the security which the resurrection of Christ gives for the resurrection of his people, arising out of what led to his resurrection. "But now Christ is risen, and is become the first-fruits of them that slept."

[1] "The common translation, 'the last enemy which shall be destroyed is death,' quite loses the spirit of the passage: for of what consequence is it to know whether death be the first or the last enemy that is to be destroyed? but to be assured that death, the wages of sin, shall be ultimately abolished, and utterly done away, is a most important discovery indeed, for which we are wholly indebted to the christian revelation."—BELSHAM.

"Now" is here not expressive of time, but of transition. If Christ be not risen, then these consequences would follow; "but now Christ *is* risen:" nothing is, nothing can be, more certain than this; and, in rising, he is "the first-fruits of those who sleep." The language is figurative. The first-fruits are the first ripe grain that is cut down in the field, or the first ripe fruit which is gathered from the tree. It is a part of the harvest, and an intimation that the rest is coming. The general idea intended to be suggested is this, that, as the first-fruits are an earnest of the coming harvest, inasmuch as the operation of the laws of God's physical government, which have ripened a part, will in due season ripen all the grain and the fruit—so the resurrection of Christ—who was the first of our race who returned to life, never again to submit to death, in which sense he is "the first-begotten from the dead,"—is an earnest of the resurrection of all his people—of all who sleep in him—as the operation of the laws of God's moral government, which raised him from the dead, shall also, in due time, raise them from the dead. He, the divinely-appointed representative of his people, had assumed their nature, and subjected himself to their liabilities. He undertook to do all that was necessary to save them, in consistency with, in illustration of, the perfections of the Divine character. In the fulfilment of his covenant engagements, in discharge of their liabilities, he had closed a life of perfect obedience, by submitting to death in their room. On the cross he had said, "It is finished!" 'the debt is paid, the work is done.' It was on the ground of this perfect obedience and satisfaction that he was raised from the dead by the power of the Father. Had it not been complete, he must have remained among the dead. The resurrection is the voice of the Supreme Judge re-echoing the cry on the cross, "It is finished!" It was that obedience and satisfaction, which form our justification, that secured his resurrection. As he was delivered to death on account of our offences, so he was

raised again on account of our justification, on account of that which justifies us—his all-perfect obedience to the death; and the operation of the same grace, righteousness, and faithfulness that, on that ground, produced his resurrection, will—must—in due time produce the resurrection of all who are *his*—all who are "in him." The first-fruits of the earth do not so certainly foreshow the ripening of the complete harvest, as the resurrection of Christ does the resurrection of his people. The laws by which grain ripens are liable to be interfered with in a variety of ways; and, in a season where the first-fruits have been gathered fully ripe, owing to unlooked for changes in the atmosphere, the general harvest may yet be "a heap in the day of desperate sorrow." But the laws of the Divine moral government are subject to no such interferences; and we may conclude, with absolute certainty, that, since Christ is risen, his people *shall*—ay, *must*—rise.

It has been very generally thought by interpreters, that, in employing the term "first-fruits" in reference to Christ, as risen from the dead, the apostle not only uses the word in its general figurative sense, but that he refers to the solemn religious ceremony, under the law, of the presentation of the first-fruits to Jehovah in the temple.[1] They suppose that the apostle had in his eye the following ordinance of the Levitical institution,—"When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it."[2] All the fruits of the

[1] Theodoret takes this view, and considers Rom. xi. 16 as parallel, noticing here—"Τῇ ἀπαρχῇ πάντως ἀκολουθήσει τὸ φύραμα." But the φύραμα in Romans is not the full harvest, but the mass of dough made of the handful of first fruit when ground into flour. A Dutch divine, Verpoorteen, has found or invented eighteen points of resemblance between our Lord and the handful of first fruits; but as Gerdes slyly remarks, "plurimas, si non omnes, ab apostoli scopo alienas."

[2] Lev. xxiii. 10, 11.

land of Canaan were viewed as of themselves profane—none might eat them till they were consecrated by the presentation of the first-fruits to Jehovah. Before that ceremony, none of the crops could be reaped; after that ceremony, it became a mere matter of convenience when any or all of them should be cut down. It is remarkable that that presentation was to take place on the second day of unleavened bread—the day of our Lord's resurrection; and there can be no doubt that when he, raised from the dead, as it were presented himself to God, he was accepted, not only himself, but "accepted," as Bishop Pearson says, "for all his people, that so their dust might be sanctified, their corruption hallowed, and their mortality consecrated to all eternity."—The resurrection of Him who was their substitute, indicating that their dead bodies were not polluted things, but would in due time, quickened like his, be admitted into the Divine presence.

Whatever judgment may be formed as to the typical signification of the Jewish rite, we have seen that the words, viewed simply as figurative, strikingly express the sentiment that the resurrection of Christ is the token and earnest, and as it were the commencement, of the resurrection of his people. Had he not risen, they never could have risen. His having risen is assurance that they also shall rise. How it is so, is, to a certain degree, suggested even by the figurative expression, as we have seen; but the apostle farther illustrates the subject in the verses that follow. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die,[1] even so in Christ shall all be made alive."[2]

[1] "ἀποθνήσκουσι, present,—ζωοποιηθήσονται, future. Commencing with Adam, the process of decay was present in, and as it were advancing in, the human race. As the reference in ζ. is pre-eminently (I would say solely) to the resurrection of the body, the future is employed."—OLSHAUSEN.

[2] "The phrases ἐν Χριστῷ πάντες, and ἐν Ἀδὰμ πάντες, which may be rendered 'all in Christ,' and 'all in Adam,' seem to denote two classes (πάντες κατά): the one including the whole posterity of Adam, who are naturally subject to death

The general idea here is the same as that more fully developed in the concluding section of the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. It is that Christ, as well as Adam, sustained a public character; that they were equally representative men—the one the representative of the whole of his natural posterity, the other the representative of the whole of his spiritual posterity. "By man"—by a man—the first man, Adam—"came death." This is the apostle's own commentary on these words: "By one man sin"—*guilt*, liability to punishment—"entered into the world, and *death* by sin, and so death passed on all men." Death was not a part of the original order of things, so far as man was concerned. "God made man immortal, and formed him an image of his own eternity." Man brought mortality and death on himself.

"As by man came death, so by man"—a man—the man Christ Jesus—"comes the resurrection of the dead." "The resurrection of the dead," as I have repeatedly stated and endeavoured to prove, here, as well as in some other parts of the apostle's writings, refers exclusively to the resurrection of life [1]—to that resurrection which is deliverance from death, as a part of the curse. What would have happened, had there been no restorative dispensation, and how the resurrection to condemnation stands connected with the resurrection of Christ—for that it is connected with it there can be no reasonable doubt—are questions, however interesting in themselves, that we have nothing to do with here. The bringing death on man, as the effect of the curse, was the work of one man, Adam; the delivery of man from death, as the effect of the curse, the manifestation of the Divine dis-

and corruption; the other, all good men, who are heirs of the resurrection and the world to come."—ALEXANDER.

[1] "Tota orationis apostolicæ series eum de resurrectione fidelium agere evincit. Neque enim *κοιμηθέντες*, ver. 20, sunt alii quam *κοιμηθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ*, ver. 18. Ili sunt *οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, ver. 23. De his speciatim, per totum hoc caput agit apostolus. Neque est dubium quin vocabulum *πάντες*, ver. 22, ad Christi fideles referri debeat."—GERDES. Mosheim, in his Exposition, takes the same view.

pleasure, is the work of one man, Christ Jesus. The first man, by sinning, brought the curse of death on himself and all his natural posterity. The second man, by becoming a curse in the room of his spiritual seed, and, under the curse, fully obeying the law and enduring its penalty, delivered himself and them from the curse of death, and secured for himself and them a glorious resurrection.

The force of the expression, "*since*" by man, or a man, came death, so by man, or a man, comes the resurrection of the dead, seems to be this—'There is a divine congruity in the arrangement as to the way in which men are to be delivered from death. It bears an analogy to the way in which men were subjected to death. It was fitting that, as one man, abusing by his sin a gracious Divine appointment, which made him the federal representative of his race, had been permitted by God to introduce universal death among his posterity, so God should appoint that the deliverance of men from that death, which is the wages of sin, should be through the obedience of one man. It is a Divine appointment; and it bears the stamp of that harmony which marks the works of God.' The idea is more fully brought out in the closing paragraph of the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, already referred to. "If by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ:" "As by the offence of one"—or rather by one offence—"judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one"—or rather by one righteousness—"the free gift comes upon all men unto justification of life."

The statement we have been illustrating is plainly meant as a reason for the assertion that Christ, risen from the dead, is the first fruits of them who slept—that his resurrection secures theirs; for in what he did and suffered, leading to his resurrection, he acted as a public character, just as Adam, in what led to death, acted as a public character. Adam's

sin, proved by himself becoming mortal, led to the death of all his natural posterity; for God had constituted him their representative. Christ's obedience, the perfection of which is proved by his resurrection, leads to the resurrection of all his spiritual posterity; for God has constituted him their representative.

The 22d verse seems added to bring out more strongly the fact, that all who *die*—that is, all the natural descendants of Adam—die in consequence of their connection with him,—their death is the execution of the curse of God against his sin; and that all who attain to the resurrection of the dead, the resurrection of life—that is, all the spiritual seed of Christ—become partakers of this privilege entirely in consequence of God's being well pleased with his obedience in their room, and with them as "in him,"—connected with him. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."[1] The sentiment is, 'All who die, die as connected with Adam: all who attain to the resurrection of the dead, attain to it as connected with Christ.'

Death is the punishment of the first sin of the first man. All the death that ever has been, or ever will be, is to be considered in this light. So the apostle argues in the fifth chapter of the Romans, in support of his assertion, All men die in consequence of their becoming *guilty*—exposed to punishment—by the first sin of the first man. 'During the Mosaic law,' says he, '*all* died. But was not this the execution of the sanction of that law? No; for its sanction was not *death*, but violent untimely death: and that it was not the cause of death is plain; for, though where there is no law there is no transgression, yet men died before the law, as well as under it,—from Adam to Moses, as well as from Moses to Christ. But might not death be the execu-

[1] "To every one unprejudiced it must be clear that the expression—ἐν τῷ Ἀδάμ here, as δι' ἀνθρώπου, Rom. v. 12,—indicates Adam, not only as the *beginner* of sin, and its consequence—death, but as the *origin*, just as Christ is the origin of life, and its most elevated display, the ἀνάστασις."—OLSHAUSEN.

tion of the sanction of natural law? No, not that either; for it took place in the case of infants and idiots, who were not capable of violating natural law.[1] Their death was the execution of the Divine sentence—the expression of the Divine displeasure—against the first sin of the first man; and what it was in them, it is in all.' Men die just because they are the descendants of the man who broke the covenant, of which death was the penalty. All who die,—and all die, "it is appointed to men to die,"—all who die, die as in Adam,—intimately related to Adam by a divine constitution. Next to the sufferings of Christ, and the pains of everlasting punishment, this is the most tremendous manifestation ever made of the evil of sin.

As this is the truth with regard to death, so there is an analogous truth with regard to deliverance from death as the effect of the curse—the resurrection of life. All who are thus made alive, are made alive as connected with Christ. Indeed, all saving blessings are enjoyed by men only as connected with Christ. They deserve punishment, —they never can deserve anything else. It is "in him" that they are "blessed with heavenly and spiritual blessings." "Chosen *in* him before the foundation of the world," "*in* him they have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,"—"they are made accepted *in* him," and "*in* him they obtain an inheritance." The apostle's deep personal conviction of the importance of being "*in Christ*," in order to the attainment of a glorious resurrection, is very strikingly expressed in the following passage in his Epistle to the Philippians:—"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found *in him*, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness

[1] Rom. v. 12-14.

which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead:" [1]—no attaining of that, in his estimation, but by being found "in Christ." And surely, as the death of all his natural posterity is a wonderful manifestation of the displeasure of God against the first sin of the first man, so the bestowing all the ineffable, inconceivable glories of the resurrection of life on all the spiritual seed of Christ—"a multitude which no man can number, out of every kindred, and people, and tongue, and nation" of the sons of men—is a wonderful proof how well pleased the Father is "for HIS righteousness' sake," when, on account of it, He raises to a state of happiness, so high and secure, such multitudes, whose righteous desert was "everlasting destruction from his presence, and from the glory of his power." The whole of this argumentative statement, as has been well remarked, proceeds on the great fundamental principle of Christianity, "that in the economy of grace, Christ and his people are so one, that what is asserted of the one is thereby virtually asserted of the other, and can have force only with those who understand and believe this."

The words that follow, "But every man in his own order: Christ, the first-fruits, then they who are Christ's at his coming: then cometh the end," seem introduced to meet the thought—'But how is this? We see that in Adam all die. He died, and all in him; every one of his natural posterity die; but though Christ be risen, we do not see any of those in him, far less all of them, rise. They die as being in Adam; but they do not rise as being in Christ. He rose the third day after his death; but years and ages pass over the graves of those who are "in him," and there is no resurrection.' 'It is even so,' as if the apostle said; 'but the

[1] Phil. iii. 8-12.

statement is not the less true. All *in him* shall certainly arise, as all *in Adam* die; "but every man in his own order."'[1]

The reference of "every man" is somewhat doubtful. Some have restricted it to those who are Christ's. 'Every one of those who are Christ's shall be made alive in his own order.' But this does not seem to be the reference, for all the dead in Christ are to rise at once—not successively—not each in his own order. They have a common order of resurrection. Others have, with much more probability, considered it as referring both to Christ and those who are Christ's—each in his own order; Christ immediately, on the third day after death, as the first-fruits; and they, as the full harvest, at his coming. That would undoubtedly be the true interpretation, if the 23d verse immediately followed the 20th. I cannot help, however, thinking that "every one," or "each of them," refers to the "all" who die in Adam, and the "all" who in Christ are made alive.[2] These are the two bands.[3] There is a band on which death passes —the first man, and all his natural descendants; and there is a band to which life is restored—the second man—the Lord from heaven—and all his spiritual descendants.[4] The Apostle does not specify what takes place with respect to the first band—Adam, and his descendants. That was not the subject under consideration. We know, however, what the

[1] τάγμα is a band or division, such as a battalion of soldiers,—as Ignatius, in a passage soon to be quoted for another purpose, calls his guard of ten soldiers τάγμα στρατιωτικόν. τάξις is order.

[2] "All in Adam die,—all in Christ are made alive; but each in his own band. 'Eodem tempore resurgent impii; sed illi non veniunt sub hunc beatum censum.' They are not ἐν Χριστῷ,—they do not belong to his τάγμα. πάντες and ἕκαστος stand in the same relation, Luke ii. 3. 'Adamus ducet seriem (τάγμα) morientium,—Christus reviviscentium.'"—JEHNE.

[3] τάγματα.

[4] Theodoret and Theophylact strangely refer the τάγματα to the two divisions of the raised up,—those at the right hand of the Judge, and those on the left. They keep, however, to the true meaning of the word τάγμα. Macknight translates—"Every one in his proper band;" and says, in his note, "So τοῖς ἰδίῳ ταγματι signifies; for τάγμα denotes a *band* of soldiers, a *cohort*, a *legion*.—V. Scapulam." If we may believe Gerdes, Sanchez applies this passage to the monastic orders in the Roman church!

fact is: Adam became mortal on committing his first sin; and, when the appointed period of his continuance on earth came, submitted to the sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return;" and all his descendants have, one after another, descended after him to the grave. But it is otherwise with the second Adam and his descendants. He, having finished the work which procures both his and their restoration to a glorious life, after lying long enough in the grave to give satisfactory evidence that he had really died, rose again from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He has risen as the first-fruits. It is otherwise with his spiritual descendants, who receive here a very significant designation, "They who are Christ's."[1] These are plainly the same who, in the preceding verse, are said to be "in him." They are his—given to him in the eternal covenant—redeemed by his blood—brought to him by the Father, in their effectual calling,—and under the influence of his Spirit, voluntarily surrendering themselves to him to be his only, wholly, and for ever. "They who are Christ's" die like him, but they do not, like him, rise on the third day, as some dreaming mystics have supposed. They do not rise one by one, as all in Adam die. Christ, the first-fruits, has been made alive, and they shall all, who are in him, be made alive at his coming—not till then. The coming here is the second coming of the Lord, "without sin"—not as a sin-offering—"for" the complete "salvation" of his people. Then all in him who "are in their graves shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live, and shall come forth to the resurrection of life."[2]

[1] "οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Suave polyptoton, Χριστὸς, Χριστοῦ. Christiani sunt quasi appendix τῆς ἀπαρχῆς."—BENGEL.

[2] John v. 28. The resurrection referred to, I have no doubt, is not that partial resurrection which, according to some, is to precede the millennium, but the general resurrection which is immediately to precede the final judgment. It is quite foreign from my purpose to discuss this question. It is fully and fairly discussed, and satisfactorily settled, in Mr Brown's work, already referred to, which I cordially recommend to those who have been "shaken in mind, or troubled," on this subject.

Here a question naturally occurs, 'But why is this the order of the second Adam and his seed? Why is death not now abolished? Why do redeemed men die, or, if they must die, why do their bodies continue, it may be for many ages, in the grave? Why is the prey allowed to fall into the hands of the mighty? Why are the ransomed captives not immediately delivered?' It may be doubtful how far it is wise either to propose or to answer such questions. It might be enough to say, "It is not for us to know or to determine the times and the seasons." His time obviously is not yet come; our time is always ready. With him "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." It might be enough to say, These questions take their place along with a number of other questions, which men more curious than wise have proposed. 'Why did God not form man with an absolute security of continuing holy? Why were the destinies of the race so deeply involved in the conduct of their original parents? Why were sinning angels consigned to hopeless destruction, while a Saviour was provided for man? Why, when the merits and the power of that Saviour are equally infinite, are not all men saved? Why was the Saviour of the world not brought into it till four thousand years after men needed his interference? Why was revelation confined to one nation before his coming? and why has it not been extended to all nations since his coming?' I scarcely think angels meddle with such questions; but "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." It can do no harm, however, to remark, that the delay of the general resurrection of those who are Christ's, till the close of the present system of things, is owing to no deficiency in merit, or power, or grace, in the great Deliverer. Neither are we, I apprehend, going beyond our measure when we advert to some of the advantages which seem to be connected with the arrangement—the "order"—which infinite wisdom has preferred; though in this, as, indeed, in everything, "his thoughts are not as

our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways." While it is utterly impossible for us to see to what an extent another arrangement would have affected the established order of things, we cannot avoid seeing that its effects would be numerous and important, changing entirely the character of the present state, and unfitting it for many of the purposes it is intended to serve, and actually does serve. The denunciation of death, as the punishment of the first sin of the first man, is exceedingly precise; and its execution, in the case of every individual, even of those who are Christ's, is a striking confutation of the first lie, and a striking vindication of the truth, of God.

It is also, as we have already remarked, a most impressive lesson respecting the evil of sin—race after race descending into the grave, to mark God's displeasure at a single violation of his law, and that, in the estimation of many, no very flagrant transgression. The great Judge of all appears full of awful majesty, when we see *death*, his messenger, riding forth conquering and to conquer. How important to secure his favour—to escape his displeasure! Death, too, in various ways, whether their own death or that of others, proves the means of exercising and strengthening the holy principles of those who are Christ's—their faith, their hope, their humility, their resignation, their patience; the Saviour thus wresting out of the devil's hands the weapons of his own forging, and turning them into instruments of holiness and happiness, instead of sin and misery.

Besides, it is obvious to remark, that the simultaneous resurrection of all the dead in Christ—the abolition of death at once and for ever—will place in a peculiarly glorious light the power and grace of the Conqueror, and the magnitude and completeness of the victory. Had all the dead saints at the resurrection of Christ—a goodly company, but still comparatively a little flock—been set free from the bands of death, and taken with him to heaven; and had, since that time, every individual saint been freed from the

necessity of dying, and been quietly clothed upon instead of being unclothed, the scene had been incomparably less striking than that which will be exhibited on the last eventful day of the world's history, when the merit of the Redeemer, and his power founded on his merit, will bring the whole human race out of their graves, and before his tribunal, and enable him to confer on them all an endless existence,—on his own redeemed ones an endless existence of perfect holy happiness. Oh, what a day of triumph to the Redeemer and to the redeemed! How glorious will the King of Israel, the Captain of our salvation, be that day at the head of his ransomed, re-animated legions! Yes, radiant as they will be in holy light and loveliness, their glory will be as nothing, by reason of the glory that excelleth,—a glory, compared with which the splendour of a thousand suns is as darkness. Yet will he not only be glorious in himself, but glorified in his risen saints, with bodies "fashioned like unto his glorious body," and "admired"—by all the angelic millions—"in them who have believed." And how loud, and lofty, and sweet, and long-drawn out, will be the shout of triumph over the fell tyrant—the last enemy,—and the hymn of thanksgiving to the Conqueror who has destroyed him—the Prince of life, the King immortal,—which shall rise from the countless multitude of ransomed captives,—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to him who hath given us the victory." "Salvation to our God who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever." Hallelujah! And again, and again, and again, they shall cry—Hallelujah!

"Then cometh the end."[1] The harvest is over, the earth is reaped, all that is excellent is ready to ascend into hea-

[1] It is lame arguing, that because the term expressed by ἔπειτα—the term between the resurrection of Christ and that of his people, is a long period,—εἶτα must also express a long period. It means *after*: but it may be—in the present case all the probabilities are on the side of its being—*immediately after*. ZELTNER, an acute critic, remarks, "Usus perpetuus in N. T. verbi, ordinem connexorum duntaxat, atque meri proin ordinis notam exhibet, neque ullibi grandia ejusmodi decem seculorum intervalla exigit."

ven; and the earth and all that is in it must now be burnt up. These words, "Then cometh the end"—or, leaving out the supplement, "then the end,"—have commonly been connected with what follows, and considered as equivalent to, "then cometh the end of the world," which the words, taken by themselves, may mean; but we think it much more natural to connect them with what goes before—"Christ the first-fruits—then they who are Christ's at his coming—then the end," *i. e.*, 'Either then the conclusion, or then the completion of the great harvest;' a new sentence commencing with, "When he shall have delivered up the kingdom," and ending with, "the last enemy—death—shall be destroyed."

I conclude the illustration of this part of the subject with a reflection, which I think must have arisen already in the mind of every attentive reader. May it be written there as with a pen of iron—as with lead in the rock for ever. Oh, the transcendant importance of being "in Christ!" That makes all the difference between guilt and justification—depravity and holiness—danger and safety—a glorious hope, and a fearful looking for of judgment—the resurrection to life, and the resurrection to damnation—heaven and hell—eternal happiness and eternal misery. Gain that, and you gain everything; miss that, and all is lost. Apart from him there is no true happiness; *in* him there is "salvation with eternal glory."

§ 3. *That to which Christ's resurrection led—his universal dominion—secures the resurrection of life to his people.*

The apostle now proceeds to show that Christ's resurrection is connected with a state of power and authority, which is at once sufficient for securing, and intended to secure, the resurrection of all that are in him—that are his. This is the sentiment which, if we mistake not, is contained in the paragraph from verse 24 to verse 28.

It will be necessary to say a few words, to make this evident, as the words have very generally been considered as conveying a meaning somewhat different.

The paragraph, from verse 24 to verse 28, has been viewed by many interpreters as a species of parenthetical digression—the apostle returning to his main argument at verse 29. The words, "Then cometh the end," have been considered as the beginning of a sentence, which ends with the 24th verse; and the 25th, and 26th, and 27th, and 28th verses are then all viewed as separate sentences. This, which is the view taken by our translators, gives a disjointed appearance to the paragraph as it stands in their version. The meaning thus brought out of the words is substantially this: 'When they who are Christ's are raised at his coming, then will be the end—the end of the world—the termination of the present order of things; then will the voice be heard in heaven, "It is done," and the mystery of God shall be finished. When this end has come, "he," that is, Christ, "shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father;"[1] he shall, in some sense or other, resign the delegated government with which, as mediator, he has been invested—having, according to the divine oracle, during the period of that rule, "put down," in the exercise of divine power, "all" opposing "rule, and authority, and power." "Death, the last enemy," as being an opposing power, shall also "be destroyed;" and, in the new order of things, the kingdom being given back to the Father, there shall be a remarkable manifestation of the subjection of the Son himself, as well as of every other being, to the Father, in order that the glory of essential Divinity may be transcendantly displayed.' This, so far as I am able to put into plain words views which seem to have been but dimly seen by those who express them,—is the ordinary interpretation of this paragraph.[2]

[1] τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρί,—properly, 'to Him who is the God and Father.' 2 Cor. i. 3.

[2] KNAPP, in his "Christian Theology," § 98, expresses the common opinion

Now, I think it must strike every careful reader that it is difficult to see what much in this statement has to do with what is plainly the apostle's object, to show the security which Christ's resurrection gives for the resurrection of his people—to show that as, if the dead rise not, he cannot have risen; so, if he be risen, the dead in him shall assuredly rise. Besides, it seems to involve a denial of the perpetuity of our Lord's mediatorial kingdom, which is often, and in the plainest terms, asserted in Scripture. "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." The prophets declare that "of his kingdom there shall be no end;" and the apostles speak of "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour."[1] In no other passage of Scripture is there any allusion to a resignation on the part of the Son, and a resumption on the part of the Father, of the authority and power delegated to the God-man mediator; and it seems peculiarly strange that "the subjection of the Son to the Father" should be

with greater clearness than it is ordinarily stated:—"At the end of the world, the government which Christ administers as man will cease. Thenceforward the Father will no longer make use, as before, of the intervention of the Messiah to govern and bless men. Christ will then lay down his former charge, and give it over to the Father, who had entrusted him with it. In the abodes of the blessed the Father will himself reign over his saints with an immediate government, and in a manner different from the rule He causes to be exercised over them through Christ, his ambassador." It is all but a ludicrous idea which Theophylact suggests, 'That the statement was intended by the apostle to prevent the converts from paganism at Corinth from supposing that there was to be a re-acting of the dethronement of Saturn by his son Jupiter.'

[1] 2 Sam. vii. 16. Psal. lxxxix. 28-37. Isa. ix. 6, 7. Dan. ii. 44; vii. 14. Heb. i. 18. Rev. i. 5, 6; v. 13; vii. 21. 2 Pet. i. 11. The perpetuity of the kingdom of Christ, so strongly stated in these passages, is just what might be expected. The incongruity of the opposite supposition is very powerfully exhibited by a writer, whose general views respecting the ἀνάστασις I cannot but think singularly fanciful, though ingeniously supported,—Professor Bush:—"How should he deliver up his kingdom, when this very kingdom was given him as the reward of his humiliation and obedience unto death? Is his reward to cease as soon as his work is done? Are the saints to be crowned with an eternal reward, and the King of saints with a temporary one? Shall he cease to be Lord and King at the very time that every knee begins to bow to him, and every tongue to confess? Surely this is the most violent of all suppositions. What conclusion, then, is possible, but that the kingdom here said to be 'delivered up,'—which, by the way, is more properly rendered 'made over,'—is the usurped kingdom of his enemies, not his own?"—*Anastasis*, p. 375.

spoken of as a new thing—as something exclusively characteristic of the order of things which shall commence after "the end," when the kingdom is delivered up to the Father by the Son—something to take place *then;* while the subordination of the Son to the Father is the character of the whole mediatorial economy. That economy, throughout, proceeds on the principle that, while essentially the Son and the Spirit are equal with the Father, being one with him, in the economy of grace they are subordinate to the Father, who sustains the majesty of Divinity. The Father is greater than they. He sends, and they come; He appoints, and they execute. All things are *of* him *by* them. These are some of the difficulties connected with the ordinary mode of interpretation, which must meet every reflecting mind, and which, I confess, I find it impossible to get over.

I shall state, as briefly as I am able, the view I have been led to take of it, and the grounds on which I have done so. I apprehend that the words, "Then is the end," are not the beginning but the end of a sentence—the sentence, the first part of which constitutes the 22d and 23d verses. "In Christ shall all be made alive:" first Christ; then "they that are Christ's at his coming; then" (you will observe *cometh* is a supplement) "the end"—the termination or completion, in contrast with the "first-fruits," of the resurrection,—the subject the apostle is speaking about. What follows is for illustrating how, at the coming of Christ, there will be an end or completion of the resurrection. It is to be by the destruction of death. There will be no more resurrection, for, among men, there will be no more mortals to die, no more dead to raise; and this is to be accomplished in the exercise of that delegated power, by which the risen Redeemer is "to subdue all things to himself" and to his Father. The sentence beginning with, "When he shall have delivered up the kingdom," ends with the 26th verse,[1]

[1] Theophylact connects ὅταν τὸ τέλος with what goes before; and Heinsius adopts a similar mode of construing this passage.—*Exercitt. Sac.*, p. 381.

—the only parenthesis in the passage being the 25th verse. "The kingdom" here seems to be actual recognised lordship or dominion; as when it is said that, in the latter days, "the Lord shall be king"[1]—shall be acknowledged to be king—shall actually rule, be submitted to and obeyed, "over all the earth,"—when the kingdom is said to "depart from Nebuchadnezzar,"—when his authority ceased to be acknowledged in consequence of his insanity,—and when it is said, in the Apocalypse, "Now is come the kingdom of our God,"[2] —and when "the kingdom"[3]—the sovereignty—"of this world" is said to "become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ." The "delivering up" is not the resigning the lordship he possesses, but, as the words may be rendered, "the restoring,"[4] "the bringing back the kingdom," is the putting down the revolt which commenced in the sin of angels, and has been carried on through means of the fall of man, and its results—the getting of the Divine supremacy effectually asserted and universally acknowledged,—the great object for which the Son was placed on his mediatorial throne—glorified, that he might thus glorify the Father. The kingdom, or dominion, shall be rescued from his enemies, and restored to Godhead, the majesty of which is sustained by the Father; but not in any such sense as denies that the Son's "dominion is an everlasting dominion," and that "of his kingdom there shall be no end."[5] This great object is to be gained in putting down "all rule, and all authority and power" that is opposed to the kingdom, or supreme acknowledged authority of God, or is inconsistent with his holy and benignant purposes. Death personified is one of these opposing powers, and must be put down—must be

[1] Zech. xiv. 9. [2] Rev. xii. 10. [3] *βασιλεία* is the true reading.

[4] *Reddo* is the meaning assigned here to *παραδίδωμι* by Schleusner,—*vide* ad. Verb. 7. Theodoret's words are remarkable:—"*Παραδίδωσι τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ, οὐκ αὐτὸς τῆς βασιλείας γυμνούμενος, ἀλλὰ τὸν τύραννον διάβολον καὶ τοὺς ἐκείνου συνεργοὺς ὑποτάττων, καὶ πάντας ὑποκύψαι παρασκευάζων καὶ τὸν τῶν ὅλων ἐπιγνῶναι Θεόν.*" Theophylact's interpretation is—"*ὑπὸ τυράννου διηρπασμένην τὴν βασιλείαν ἐξελὼν, ἐλευθέραν παρίστα τῷ Πατρί.*"

[5] Bib. Repos., 2d Series, vol. ii., p. 444.

destroyed. While it exists, the Divine purpose as to the complete salvation of his people cannot be accomplished; and, when death is destroyed, then is there an end to raising the dead—then is the completion of the resurrection—an event obviously secured by that power and authority with which the risen Saviour is invested.

Read now the sentence, first without the parenthesis in the 25th verse, and then with it. First without it,—"When he"—that is plainly Christ—"shall have restored the kingdom to the Father—when he shall have put down all rule, and authority, and power—the last enemy shall be destroyed—death." You will notice that the words *that* and *is* are supplements, and, instead of being needed to bring out the sense, they obscure it. Read now with the parenthesis,—"When he shall have restored the kingdom to the Father—when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power (for he must reign till He—that is, God—hath put all things under his feet)—the last enemy shall be destroyed—death." The reason of the insertion of the parenthetical reference to the ancient oracle in the beginning of the 110th Psalm, is obviously to meet the thought —'But how is he to bring back the kingdom to the Father —how is he to put down all rule, and all authority, and all power?' The reply is, he has all the authority and power that are necessary for this purpose; for the ancient oracle must be accomplished, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." [1]

The only thing farther necessary, in the way of exposition of the words of the text, is to point out the meaning and reference of the 27th and 28th verses.[2] It has been common to consider these verses as illustrative of "the delivering up the kingdom to the Father, when the end

[1] Psal. cx. 1.

[2] "It may be wondered why the apostle thought this observation necessary. But it is more surprising that there should have been heresies in the world which made many observations necessary that to us appear superfluous."—Dr Lawson, MS. Notes.

is come,"—when the Son is, according to the ordinary interpretation, to become in some new way subject to the Father. Were I taking that view of the reference of the passage, I should be constrained to read the words rendered in our version—"then shall the Son also himself be subject unto the Father," 'even then shall the Son be subject to the Father,' and to consider them as describing, not the commencement of something quite new, but the continuation of what was already and had long been established. The mediatorial kingdom shall not then end: it shall continue—continue for ever. The more, however, I look at the words, and consider them in their connection, the more am I persuaded that they are intended as an illustration of the delegated character of that dominion and authority, in the exercise of which the Son brings back the kingdom to the Father, and puts down all opposing rule, authority, and power. It is as if the apostle had said, 'In referring to the 110th Psalm, I stated that Christ must reign till *Jehovah*, who says to him, Sit on my right hand, has made his enemies his footstool.' The power, in the exercise of which the kingdom is to be brought back to the Father, is not power distinct from the Divine power. It is in the exercise of that power common to the Father and the Son as divine persons, which, like "the life which he hath in himself," "the Father hath given," or appointed, "the Son to hold," that he is to bring back the kingdom to the Father: and this appears not only from this passage, but also from another passage in the book of Psalms, which, though primarily referring to redeemed man, finds its first fulfilment in the person of the God-man Redeemer, as well as its full accomplishment through his mediation. It is Jehovah who makes the enemies of David's Lord and ours his footstool. It is Jehovah, also, who is represented as putting *all* things under man's feet;[1] an oracle which the apostle, in

[1] Psal. viii. 6.

the Epistle to the Hebrews, while plainly intimating that it refers to redeemed man, teaches us to regard as having been fulfilled in that investiture of our Lord with mediatorial dominion to which the 110th Psalm refers, as a seating of him on the throne of Jehovah, at his right hand. "We see not yet," he says, "all things put under him"—man. "But we see Jesus," a man—the representative-man, "who," for a season, "was made a little lower than the angels"—that he might taste death for every one of his brethren—"for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour."[1] This indicates clearly that the unlimited power, in the exercise of which the Son is to put down all opposing power, is the power of God. When, in the eighth Psalm, it is said that Jehovah is to subject all things to man, it is very obvious that He who is to subject them to him, who is to give him superiority to—sovereignty over—them, in doing so, is not to denude himself of his own power or authority. That power necessarily remains supreme. When that is to take place to which these oracles refer,—that is, when the Son is to have all power conferred on him in heaven and earth,—it is quite evident that then, as well as while he was for a season "made lower than the angels," he shall be subject to the Father.[2] A delegated authority necessarily implies a supremacy in him who confers it. The Father will be greater than he; his kingdom, though in reference to creatures supreme, in reference to essential Deity shall be, and appear to be, delegated, "that God may be all in all." When the Son is "highly exalted," it is by the Father; when he receives a name, to which "every knee is to bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord," it is "to the glory of God the Father."[3] And this arrangement is made, that

[1] Heb. ii. 8, 9.

[2] The word in the beginning of the 28th verse, rendered "shall be subdued," is the same that is elsewhere in the passage rendered "made subject to," and does not refer to our Lord's actually having put down all enemies, but to his being invested with power and authority over the whole creation of God.

[3] The view given above is substantially that of Storr, in his dissertation "De Notione Regni Cœlestis."—*Opusc. Academ.*, vol. i., p. 281.

it may be obvious that "all things are of God,"—that "of HIM, and through HIM, and to HIM are all things," "God blessed for ever."[1]

The passage, thus expounded, teaches us the following principles:—First, That the risen Saviour is invested with unlimited power and authority. He "reigns,"—"all things are subjected to him." Secondly, The design of his being thus invested with unlimited power and authority is, that he may "restore the kingdom to the Father." Thirdly, In restoring the kingdom to the Father, he will "put down all opposing rule, and authority, and power." Fourthly, In the accomplishment of this, the destruction of death as an opposing power is necessarily involved. And fifthly, All this is to be accomplished by *Divine* power, administered by the Son, that the whole glory of the bringing back the kingdom may be seen to belong, and be ascribed, to *Him*, "*of* whom are all things, and *through* whom are all things," and *to* whom, therefore, it is most meet that all things should be,—whose glory ought to be the end, as his will is the cause and the law, of the universe. With a very brief illustration of these principles, which we think we have brought out of the words before us—not put into them—and which seem also to exhaust them, we shall occupy the remaining part of this section.

(1.) *The risen Saviour is invested with unlimited power and authority.*

I observe, then, in the first place, that the risen Saviour is invested with unlimited power and authority. In the passage before us, it is said he reigns: "he must reign,

[1] The following is an amusing specimen of Patristic exegesis:—"Ut sit Deus omnia in omnibus, hoc sensu accipiendum est. Dominus itaque Salvator noster nunc omnia non est in omnibus, sed pars in singulis: verbi gratia, in Salomone, sapientia; in Davide, bonitas; in Job, patientia; in Daniele, cognitio futurorum; in Petro, fides; in Phinees et Paulo, zelus; in Joanne, virginitas; in cæteris, cætera. Cum autem rerum omnium finis advenerit, tunc omnia in omnibus erit, ut singuli sanctorum omnes virtutes habeant, ut sit Christus totus in cunctis."—HIERONYMUS, Ep. ad Amand.

till God hath put all his enemies under his feet;" and that "God hath put all things under his feet." The reference is, in the first instance, to Psalm cx. 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool;"—a prophetic oracle intimating that, at the period referred to, which in prophetic vision was present to the Psalmist's mind,—the period of the exaltation, which commenced in his resurrection,—the Messiah should be invested with the government of the universe, while, by the exercise of divine power, everything opposed to the establishment of his kingdom of truth, and peace, and holiness, should be subdued or destroyed. The reference in the second case is to Psalm viii. 4-6, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet;"—an oracle referring not to man in his original state, but in his restored state,—verified first in the God-man, and, through his mediation, to be verified in all his ransomed ones.

These are by no means the only ancient oracles in which the Great Deliverer of man is represented as possessed of unlimited power and authority. "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for

ever and ever." "The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!" "Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever. His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him." "All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him," "and his enemies shall lick the dust." "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high."[1]

These honours are often represented as the rewards of labour and sufferings in the cause of truth and righteousness, and, in at least one ancient oracle, are connected with the resurrection from the dead. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," in the separate state, into which by death it was to enter; "neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."[2]

These things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, he hath fulfilled. When men "had taken, and with wicked hands crucified and slain" him,— "delivered for our offences by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,"— God glorified his Son Jesus, "raising him up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it;"—"exalting him by his right hand, a Prince and a Saviour," and making him "both Lord and Christ"—"Lord of all;"— "setting him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

[1] Psal. ii. 6-9; xlv. 3-6; xxi. 1, 3-5; lxxii. 9, 11; lxxxix. 27. Isa. ix. 6, 7; lii. 13.

[2] Psal. xvi. 10, 11.

far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come;" and "putting all things under his feet;" "and giving him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body; the fulness of him who filleth all in all." "God hath highly exalted him," "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" "and hath given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Yes, if there be a truth clearly revealed in Scripture, it is this, that Jesus Christ, who "once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," having been raised from the dead, "is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto him."[1] This is the great truth on which the apostle bases his second argument for the security of the resurrection of Christians, as the necessary result of the resurrection of Christ. His resurrection, as it originated in a sacrifice which procured both his resurrection and theirs, led to a kingdom, the possession of which makes it certain that they shall not continue for ever under the power of death. How it does so, will come out as we illustrate the other matters contained in our text.

(2.) *The design of this investiture is, that he may bring back the kingdom to the Father.*

I proceed to remark, in the second place, that the design of the risen Redeemer's being thus invested with unlimited

[1] 1 Pet. iii. 18, 22.

power and authority, is to "bring back the kingdom to the Father." He is to "deliver up"—*i. e.*, as we understand it, to "restore"—to "bring back the kingdom to the Father." These expressions seem to indicate that, in some sense or other, the kingdom has departed from the Father. There is a sense, and an important one, in which the kingdom never has departed—never can depart—from the Father. His *right* to reign, and his *power* to assert that right, are indubitable and infinite, immutable and eternal. There is no being, there is no event, that is or can be beyond his control,—ay, there is no being, no event, which shall not be made ultimately to subserve the purposes of his wise and righteous government. Yet it is a lamentable and undeniable truth, that a portion—not an inconsiderable one—of his intelligent creatures have renounced their allegiance, and have, individually and collectively, set themselves in opposition to him, refusing to obey his holy, just, and good laws, and to yield their co-operation in working out the wise and benignant designs of his administration.[1] To this rebel part of God's subjects belong the whole of the fallen angels, and the whole, too, of fallen men, with the exception of those who are reclaimed by the Son. In the universe there is "a kingdom of darkness" as well as "the kingdom of light." There are "thrones of iniquity" as well as "the throne of righteousness." To what an extent are mankind alienated from, and enemies to, God! How full of sin and misery is a world which was created by, and belongs to, a holy and benignant God! This is a state of things which

[1] "An important portion of God's dominions is in a state of revolt. The standard of rebellion, first erected on the very battlements of heaven, has since been erected on earth; and for nearly six thousand years its inhabitants, almost with one consent, have rallied around it, scornfully rejecting the claims of their Maker, and obstinately refusing to return to their allegiance, and acknowledge Him as their rightful King. Earth and hell are leagued in one grand conspiracy against the throne of the Most High. Christ is exalted to the throne to put down these enemies and opposing powers, and thus *recover* the kingdom from the usurpers."—VAN VALKENBURGH, *Bib. Rep. Sec. Ser.*, vol. ii., No. iv., p. 443.

is most unnatural. It cannot be permitted to remain for ever: that were an indelible stain on the Divine character; but the removal of it will place in a stronger light the excellences of that character, than if such a state had never existed: a fact which is more fitted than any other to cast light on that darkest of all subjects—the introduction of evil into God's world—the permission of rebellion under God's government.

This putting down of the rebellion, either by converting the rebels into loyal subjects, or by depriving the irreclaimable of all power to diffuse evil, and making their rebellion punish itself, without injuring or endangering others, is the great object for which our risen Redeemer is placed on his mediatorial throne. The object is, to liberate the slaves—to bring back the captives—to reclaim the estranged—and to gather together in one all things which are in heaven, and which are on earth—forming, of redeemed men and holy angels, one happy family—one well-compacted commonwealth,—the members of which are bound each to each by the silken cords of enlightened love, and all feel it their highest privilege to be thoroughly subjected, in their inmost natures, to the authority and grace of the Father of all—of Him "of whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things." This is the great design of that power and authority with which the Father hath invested the Son.

(3.) *In restoring the kingdom to the Father, Christ must put down all opposing rule, and authority, and power.*

I proceed to observe, in the third place, that, in restoring the kingdom to the Father, Christ must put down all opposing rule, and authority, and power. This plainly is the only way in which the kingdom can be brought back to the Father. All power,[1] diabolical or human, exerted by individuals, or embodied in institutions or orders of things,

[1] The explanation of Calvin, "potestates legitimas, a Deo ordinatas," is inconsistent with the context, especially verse 25,—τοὺς ἐχθροὺς.

must be put down, that the kingdom may be brought back to him whose right it is to reign in us, over us, around us. "The rulers of the darkness of this world" must be dethroned—stripped of their power to deceive and to destroy. The strongholds of ignorance and error must be pulled down. All institutions, civil, religious, scientific, or social, which embody error, and cherish impiety, malignity, and injustice; idolatry, whether of the polished Greeks or Romans, or of the rude barbarians in uncivilised regions; despotism, anarchy, and every form of misgovernment; false religion, whatever name it wears,—Druidism, Buddhism, or Brahmanism,—Popery or Mohammedanism,—Atheism, or Pantheism, or Polytheism,—Rationalism or Fanaticism, —Scepticism, or Credulity; all social institutions inconsistent with the honour of God, and the happiness of man—such as caste and polygamy, war and slavery; all systems of vain philosophy,—all these "works of the devil" must be destroyed by the Son of God, in the administration of the kingdom entrusted to him by the Father. These all "make war with the Lamb; but the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is King of kings, and Lord of lords." Satan must not only be bound, but, with his rebel hosts, and those of our race who cling to his dominion, cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. "The kingdoms of this world must become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ;" and, in order to this, "the Lord, at Jehovah's right hand, shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath: he shall judge among the heathen; he shall fill the places with dead bodies; he shall wound the head over many countries." He will make it evident that the thrones of iniquity have no fellowship with him. "He will break them with a rod of iron; he will dash them to pieces as a potter's vessel."

This putting down of opposing power will be effected, to a great extent, by the word of the truth of the Gospel, under the influence of the Divine Spirit—the "fire and hammer"

so well fitted for breaking those rocks in pieces which obstruct the coming of the kingdom of God,—and also by the dispensations of Divine providence, all of which are under the control of the exalted Mediator. The language in which prophecy speaks of the putting down of all opposing rule, and authority, and power, is fitted to excite mingled feelings of delight and terror. When He sees judgment turned away backward, and justice standing afar off—truth fallen in the street, and equity not daring to enter,—truth failing, and him that departeth from evil making himself a prey,—and there is no man to help—no availing intercessor (what a picture of what our world long was—still, to a great extent, is!)—"His arm brings salvation unto him, and his righteousness sustains him. For he puts on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he puts on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and clothes himself with zeal as with a cloak. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompense. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun: when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."[1] Take another picture from the Apocalypse, which is just an anticipated history of the risen Redeemer putting down all opposing rule, and authority, and power, and bringing back the kingdom to the Father. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself: and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed

[1] Isa. lix. 16-19.

him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."[1] So much for the putting down of "all rule, and all authority and power" that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and opposes the restoration of the kingdom to the Father.

(4.) *Of our Lord's putting down all rule, and authority, and power, the destruction of death will be the crowning act.*

I go on to remark, in the fourth place, that, of this great work—the putting down of all rule, and all authority and power—the destruction of death will form the crowning act. "The last enemy shall be destroyed—death;" and

[1] Rev. xix. 11-21.

he shall be destroyed, when the risen Redeemer has restored the kingdom to the Father by putting down all rule, and authority, and power. Death—a word often used in Scripture figuratively to signify misery generally, as life is used to express happiness—is here obviously employed in its proper signification of a dissolution of the connection between the two constituent parts of human nature—body and soul—in consequence of which "the dust returns to the dust as it was, and the spirit returns to him who gave it." This change, though universal, is not, properly speaking, natural. It did not belong to the original economy, under which man was created. It is an awful anomaly—it is a fearful departure from the truly natural course of things; "for," as an apocryphal writer beautifully says, "God did not create death. He made man immortal, and formed him an image of his own eternity; nevertheless, through the envy of the devil came death into the world." Or, in the words of an infinitely higher authority, "Death entered the world by sin;" "the wages of sin is death."

Death, though by no means the most dreadful effect of sin, is a very frightful evil. It is something abhorrent to nature, and, to a prodigious extent, destructive of happiness and productive of misery. Viewed as the effect of Divine displeasure—the execution of the Divine curse—it is, and it ought to be, consummately terrible; and even when viewed, as much as is possible, apart from such considerations, there is much about death to scare the imagination, to alarm the mind, to revolt the feelings, to agitate the heart. It finally removes us from a world with which we are familiar, and from friends to whom we are attached, and ushers us into a state of existence of which we have no experience, and introduces us to beings, of whose modes of existence, and action, and enjoyment we have no distinct conception. The events which usually precede it are all of a kind calculated to alarm and distress,—exanimating sickness, agonising pain, depressing debility, restless agitation,

convulsive struggles; and then come the loathsome consequences in reference to the material part of our nature—the hideous process by which our organised frame is resolved into its original elements,—consequences which make us glad to hide the dishonours of our common nature in the bosom of our common mother—the earth. It is not wonderful, then, that death, in the language of all nations, should, when personified, be represented as an enemy to the race of man.

Here, however, death seems represented as one of the enemies of God and of Christ—one of those things that stand in the way of the full manifestation of Divine wisdom, and power, and grace, and holiness, in the complete holiness and happiness of the whole redeemed family. While their bodies remain dead, the triumph over sin is incomplete, and the Saviour does not see the entire fruit of "the travail of his soul," in which he is to find full satisfaction—"all that his heart can wish." The kingdom is not fully brought back so long as death reigns—so long as death exists.

Death is called "the last enemy;" for, when the appointed time for the resurrection arrives, death *alone* stands in the way of the consummation of Christ's mighty work of complete and eternal deliverance. Everything else that "let" has been taken out of the way.[1]

Death is sometimes descriptive of the event of the dissolution of the connection between soul and body, or the fact that this connection must be dissolved,—sometimes of the *state* into which this event brings the material part of our frame. It sometimes signifies *dying*, and sometimes the *being dead*. The noble personification here seems to include both; and, by the destruction of this awful personage—this king of terrors—we are to understand that then there is to be no more dying, and that they who are dead are to be restored to embodied life, never again to be deprived of it.

[1] 2 Thess. ii. 7.

A foundation was laid for this glorious event, as well as for the annihilation of all penal evils, in the case of all the saved, by the atonement of Christ; and, in the exercise of the power and authority secured by the atonement, it shall be fully accomplished. The dead in Christ shall, at the appointed period, hear the voice of him who is at once the Son of man and the Son of God,—who has now accomplished the whole of the mighty preparations for finishing the mystery of God,—and shall come forth to the enjoyment of immortal life.

Nor shall death be abolished only in the case of the nations of the saved; it shall cease to exist in the universe of God. No token of the displeasure of God to the *race* of man shall be allowed to remain. That displeasure will appear only towards the finally, wilfully, irreclaimably impenitent and disobedient *individuals* of the human race. "There shall be no more death." "Death and hell"—*i. e.*, the separate state —"shall be cast into the lake of fire."[1] The state of death and of separate souls shall exist no more for ever.

This is a result which the kingdom, to which the resurrection of our Lord led, absolutely secures. "He must reign, till all his enemies are put under his feet;" wherefore it follows, "The last enemy—death—must be destroyed."

(5.) *All this is to be effected by Divine power, administered by the Son, to the glory of the Father.*

It only remains that I remark, in the fifth place, All this is to be effected by Divine power administered by the Son,—that the undivided glory of man's completed salvation may be given to essential Divinity, which, in the economy of redemption, is represented by "the Father, of whom are all things," —"that God may be all in all."[2] In both the divine oracles

[1] Rev. xx. 14.

[2] "πάντα εἶναι ut apud Latinos *omnia esse*, aliquis dicitur ad quem omnia redeunt, per quem omnia fiunt, in quo omnis omnium spes posita est. Col. iii 11." —KRAUSÉ.

to which the apostle refers, this is very distinctly marked. It is Jehovah who says to David's Lord, "Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool;" and it is Jehovah who puts all things under the Representative-man, after, for a season, he had been made lower than the angels. The power and authority which is put forth is the power and authority of God—which the Father appoints the Son, in his mediatorial character, to exercise. It is equally true of the Son in heaven, as on earth, that he "doeth nothing of himself,"—*i. e.*, apart from the Father,—"whatsoever the Father doeth, the same things doeth the Son likewise." In the new creation, from the beginning to the end of it, "all things are of God by Christ Jesus." It is "God in Christ," "God by Christ," who subdues all enemies; and, therefore, to God must be given all the glory. The utterance, as it were, of the Saviour's heart, coming forth from every part of his saving work, is, "Father, glorify thy name;" or if it be, "Father, glorify thy Son," it is, "Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."[1]

Thus does the apostle conclude his proof that, if Christ be risen, then all *his* shall rise. His resurrection was the fruit of that atoning death which procured their resurrection, and is necessarily connected with that unlimited power and authority, in the exercise of which their resurrection shall be effected. I would now simply indicate, in the fewest words possible, some of the reflections which naturally rise out of the statements which have been made.

How safe are the people of Christ! An atonement has been made for them, the efficacy of which is proved by the resurrection of him who made it; and that resurrection has led to the possession of a power and authority which, so far as creatures are concerned, is absolutely unbounded. Who shall lay anything to their charge? who can condemn them? who can prevent their final salvation?

[1] "Etenim illud πᾶσιν Christum manifeste comprehendit—Christum, inquam qua homo est."—AMYRAUT, *De Vita Beata*, xix., *Thes. Salmur.*

How secure is the cause of truth and righteousness, of liberty and peace! Its ultimate triumph is absolutely certain. The kingdom shall be restored to the Father. Every hostile rule, authority, and power, must be put down. There is no overturning Christ's throne. It is Jehovah's throne; and it is Jehovah's hand that placed him on it, and will keep him on it, during the process, however many ages it may run through, of putting all his enemies under his feet.

Why should Christians, through fear of death, be subject to bondage? Why should they shrink from parting, by death, with their christian friends, or mourn for them, when they are gone, with an inconsolable sorrow? "The last enemy shall be destroyed—death."

How eagerly should all seek a personal interest in this glorious Conqueror, and the fruits of his conquest! How dreadful to be restored to life, only to become capable of more varied and severer punishment than ever, and to conjoin, in the same conscious embodied being, immortal existence and eternal death!

PART IV.—THE DENIAL OF THE RESURRECTION MAKES IT ABSURD TO EMBRACE OR PROPAGATE CHRISTIANITY, AND LEADS TO LICENTIOUS CONCLUSIONS.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 29-34.—"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die. Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."

§ 1. *Introductory Expository Remarks.*

THE apostle's dissertation on the resurrection of the dead, contained in this chapter, is, when carefully examined, found, as we have seen, to resolve itself into six parts. The

first of these paragraphs is contained in the first eleven verses, and has for its topic 'the resurrection of Jesus Christ as one of the principal elements of the Gospel, together with the evidence on which it rests.' The second paragraph, commencing with the 12th verse, and closing with the 19th, shows that, if the resurrection of the dead be denied, the resurrection of Christ cannot be consistently maintained, and points out some of the strange conclusions to which the giving up of that doctrine necessarily leads. In the third paragraph, which begins with the 20th verse, and terminates with the 28th verse, the apostle shows that as, if the dead rise not, Christ cannot have been raised, so, if Christ be risen, as he undoubtedly is, then the dead shall, and must, rise. The paragraph resolves itself into two parts, illustrative of the two different ways in which the resurrection of Christ affords absolute security for the resurrection of all his people (and it is to *their* resurrection that the whole of the apostle's discussion refers): First, The representative obedience unto death, which procured our Lord's resurrection, secures the resurrection to life of all who are *his*—all who are in him: that is the topic from verse 20th to the end of the first clause in verse 24th. Second, Their resurrection is equally secured by the unlimited authority and power—unlimited so far as creatures are concerned, though subordinate in reference to essential Deity—with which the risen Saviour has been invested.

The fourth paragraph, which stands now before us, beginning with the 29th verse, and ending with the 34th verse, is as clearly defined as those which precede it. Its topic is, 'On the supposition that there is no future life, no resurrection of the dead, the conduct of those who embrace, profess, defend, and propagate Christianity, without any reasonable hope of deriving worldly advantage from the course they adopt, with the certainty of exposing themselves to the greatest worldly evil, is in the highest degree absurd; and they who hold that there is no resurrection of the dead, to act consistently, should make the most of the present

state of being,—endeavouring to secure as much as possible of the enjoyment it is calculated to afford, however ignoble, that being the only enjoyment that is ever likely to come within their reach,'—considerations these well fitted to rouse the alarms of such of the Corinthian Christians as had been led to think favourably of those new lights, who denied or explained away the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, while at the same time they professed to continue believers in Christianity.

The keeping steadily in view, what I think no considerate reader can doubt, that these verses form one paragraph illustrative of one great thought, and that that thought is the one just indicated, will be found of material use to us, in our attempts to attach a distinct meaning to the various expressions, some of which are rather remarkable ones, by means of which that great thought is brought out. The force of the paragraph may be thus given:—'Otherwise,'[1]—that is, on the supposition that there is to be no resurrection of the dead,—'what shall they do who are baptized for the dead? Why stand we, apostles, in jeopardy every hour? Why do I, Paul, die daily? Why, after the manner of men, did I fight with beasts at Ephesus? Instead of their being baptized for the dead,—instead of our standing in jeopardy every hour,—instead of my dying daily, and fighting with beasts at Ephesus,—if there be no resurrection of the dead, it were a more reasonable course for us all to act on the principle, "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we must die." Let us have a good brute-life of it, as we are to have no other. To this the principle, that there is no resurrection of the dead, leads. Are you prepared to follow it? "Be not deceived." You are in danger of being deceived. This persuasion, that there is no resurrection of the dead, cometh not of him who called you. Be cautious with whom you associate: error and sin are in-

[1] ἐπεὶ is used as equivalent to εἰ δὲ μή, alioquin,—Rom. iii. 6; xi. 6, 22; 1 Cor. vii. 14; xiv. 16; Heb. ix. 17, 26. *Vide* Hoogeveen, *in loc.*, vol. ii., p. 390.

fectious. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Rouse yourselves thoroughly, and avoid the fatal error into which you are in danger of falling. Some of you—those of you who say there is no resurrection—have not the knowledge of God. Considering your advantages, this cannot be said without reflecting disgrace on you.' So compact and telling is this part of the apostle's argumentative expostulation.

§ 2. *If there be no resurrection, it is absurd to embrace Christianity.*

The most remarkable of the expressions in the paragraph occurs in its very commencement. "Else what shall they do[1] which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"[2] It is always advantageous, in inquiring into the meaning of an obscure and difficult passage, to see clearly, if possible, where the obscurity and difficulty lies. Were we to leave out the three words, "for the dead,"[3] which occur twice in the passage, the difficulty would disappear. "Otherwise, what shall they who are baptized do? If the dead rise not at all, why are they baptized?" These words afford a very distinct and a very appropriate meaning. 'Why do men embrace Christianity, and make a public profession of it by being baptized, in consequence of which they lose much, risk more, and gain nothing with regard to this world? What in this case do men do, when they are baptized? or what will they do? why are they baptized? Is not their conduct arrant folly, absolute madness?' We cannot, how-

[1] *τί ποιήσουσι.* Epictetus uses *τί ποιήσεις* as equivalent to *τί ὄφελος.* The words *τί γαρ ποιήσω,* Job xxxi. 14, LXX., seem a parallel expression, and plainly signify "What shall I do?" as rendered in our version.

[2] "Profecto si quisquam est in Paulinis Epistolis locus *πολυθρύλλητος,* si qui acumen eruditorum exercuerit, si qui varia illorum judicia et interpretamenta subierit, si qui habitus sit *ἐν δυσνοήτοις καὶ δυστερμηνεύτοις,* hic profecto locus est."—SPANHEIM. "Equidem hujus loci fateor mihi hactenus nullam occurrere interpretationem quæ mihi plane et undequaque satisfaciat."—DALLÆUS.

[3] *ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν.*

ever, get rid of the difficulty so readily. The words "for the dead" occur, I believe, in all existing manuscripts, and all ancient translations, with an exception or two, and we must endeavour to interpret them as we best may. But the fact which has now been so distinctly brought out, makes it strongly probable beforehand, that their true interpretation must be one which does not disagree with the meaning which the other words of the verse, as well as its connection in the paragraph, not only admit, but seem to require.

It is not wonderful that the expression, "baptized for the dead," should have been variously interpreted.[1] Both the words "baptized," and "dead," taken singly, admit of various senses and references; and the phrase "*for* the dead" is also ambiguous. We must principally depend on the connection of the passage, the coherence of the thought and argument; but we must take care not to do violence to the meaning of words or the laws of grammar.

By some, the word "baptized" has been considered as used figuratively, to designate subjection to great danger or severe suffering,—the reference being supposed to be to those who became martyrs to Christianity.[2] This would make the apostle's question equivalent to—'What shall they do who suffer and die for the faith of Christ?' and would

[1] "What this baptizing for the dead was, I confess I know not."—LOCKE. "On 1 Cor. xv. 29, I have only to say, that *I do not understand it at all* (do you?); and that I have never met with an interpretation of the phrase, 'baptized for the dead,' in which I could satisfactorily acquiesce."—JOHN WALKER. "Non hic vertitur cardo fidei."—EPISCOPIUS. "Je pense qu'il y a de vingt explications, mais apres les avoir toutes examinées, la mienne est de dire, 'JE N'EN SAI RIEN.' Nous sauvons quand Dieu sera en tous."—CLAUDE. "Hic locus inter obscurissimos et difficillimos semper habitus est et fere quot interpretes, tot nactus interpretationes."—CALIXTUS. How strangely does the modest caution and wise hesitation of such men contrast with the confident assertion of a German exegete:—"The words are so clear, that they contain no ambiguity whatever."—RUCKERT. There is a "docta et laudabilis ignorantia in studio exegetico,"—an "ἐποχὴ sacrarum literarum interpreti necessaria." It is a just remark of Mosheim, "Genus est sapientiæ in quibusdam ignorantiam profiteri;" and of Turretine, "Multum profecit in theologia, qui didicit quædam nescire."

[2] Bos, Mauduit, A. M. Schurmann, Hombergk, Launay, Alberti, Schulz, Ziegler, Nösselt, Schleusner, Battier, Macknight.

suit very well with the remaining parts of the paragraph. But this interpretation is on many grounds inadmissible. There can be no doubt that it is common, probably in all languages, to speak of being plunged in, overwhelmed with, suffering. It is also true that our Lord speaks of his sufferings as 'a baptism': "I have a baptism to be baptized with;" "can ye be baptized with the baptism with which I am to be baptized?" It may, however, be doubted whether the sacred character, fully as much as the overwhelming measure, of his sufferings, were not the idea our Lord meant to convey by using that word. At any rate, such a use of the phrase in the New Testament is exceedingly uncommon. Paul, who uses a variety of strong figurative expressions for suffering, never employs this. And even could we, on satisfactory grounds, interpret "baptized" as equivalent to 'exposed to peculiarly severe suffering,' what are we, in this case, to make of the expression "for the dead"? To interpret it, supposing the plural to be put for the singular, as equivalent to—'for him who is dead,' namely, Jesus Christ, who, according to the hypothesis, is still dead, —or to interpret it as equivalent to—'for the resurrection of the dead,' or 'for the faith of the resurrection of the dead,' is obviously quite arbitrary and unauthorised.

By a second class, "baptized for the dead" has been very fairly rendered, "baptized on account of the dead;" and the reference has been supposed to be to the Jewish rites of purification from the defilement contracted by contact with the dead.[1] The heathens, as well as the Jews, were accustomed to wash the bodies of the dead previously to interment. But the Jews had a species of purification, to which, as a rite of religion, all had to submit who came in contact with the dead. Of the law on this subject, we have a very minute account in the nineteenth chapter of the

[1] Vasquez, Bertram, Lightfoot, Cocceius, S. Schmid, Le Moyne, Braunius, Burmann, T. T. and P. D. in United Presbyterian Magazine, 1850-51. The last of the articles referred to is distinguished for great acuteness and perspicuity.

Book of Numbers. The most remarkable part of the required purification was the baptism or sprinkling with water, into which a portion of the ashes of a burnt heifer, prepared with great minuteness of prescribed ceremonial observance, had been cast. The *rationale* of this remarkable rite has been supposed to be this: Death was viewed as imputed to him who witnessed it, or took an active part in reference to him who had undergone it. He was, as it were, dead, and could not be admitted to the congregation of the living in Jerusalem—the people of God—till sprinkled by what was at once the essence, as it were, of a propitiatory sacrifice for sin, and the emblem of inward purifying influence. All this has been considered as typically indicating that men, naturally dead under the curse of God, can have this curse so removed, as to be delivered from death, and stand, at the end of the days, among those who shall awake from their sleep in the dust to everlasting life, and come out of their graves in bodies immortal, incorruptible, spiritual, glorious, only through the atoning sacrifice and transforming Spirit of the great Deliverer. 'Why did the ancient people of God submit to ceremonies so exceedingly troublesome—indicating their hope of a resurrection through the great atonement and the transforming Spirit, of which the sacrifice of the red heifer, and the running water, were types,—were it all an empty ceremony—as without doubt it was, if the dead rise not?' It is impossible not to assign the praise of ingenuity to this interpretation. It has the great advantage of giving a precise and a well-supported meaning to the phrase, "baptized for the dead;" for, in one of the apocryphal writers, we find the rite referred to expressly termed, "baptism from the dead."[1] But it may be questioned whether we are quite sure that this was the intended typical signification of the rite of purification for the dead;

[1] Ecclus. xxxiv. 25 (xxxi. Breitt.),—"Βαπτιζόμενος ἀπὸ νεκροῦ καὶ πάλιν ἁπτόμενος αὐτοῦ, τί ὠφέλησεν ἐν τῷ λουτρῷ αὐτοῦ;" But as Drusius remarks, "Aliud est ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν, aliud ἀπὸ τοῦ νεκροῦ."

and it may be considered as still more questionable whether this recondite meaning, even in its most generalised form, was so familiar to the minds of Paul's Corinthian readers, many of whom were Gentiles, as to secure that the words, "baptized for the dead," should suggest the argument which they embody for the resurrection. Besides, it does not dovetail, if I may use the expression, with the other parts of the paragraph. The whole of the rest of the paragraph refers to the absurdity of Christians professing and propagating their religion, in opposition to worldly interest in every form, if there were indeed no future life or resurrection of the dead. The connection between the first and the second branches of the paragraph is obviously very close. "Why then are they baptized from the dead? and why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" It would be difficult to find a principle which could make the connection of these two questions seem very close,—'Why did the Jews purify themselves from the defilement contracted by contact with the dead, by sprinkling themselves with the ashes of a sacrificed red heifer, mixed with running water? and why do we, Christ's apostles, every day expose our lives to imminent hazard in propagating the faith of Christ?'

By a third class, the reference has been supposed to be to certain superstitious rites, which are known to have prevailed at an early period in the christian church. There are three of these rites, to one or other of which they suppose the apostle here to refer. It was a practice among certain primitive nominal Christians, though themselves baptized, to undergo the rite of baptism anew, in the room of persons in whose welfare they had an interest, who had died unbaptized, in the hope of, in some way or other, promoting their happiness in the eternal world.[1] These persons, so

[1] Ambrose, Episcopius, Scaliger, Casaubon, Van Dale, Baronius, Simon Diodati, Camero, De Moulin, Bochart, Grotius, Dallæus, Wall, Heydenreich, Bilroth. "It is without reason," says Neander, ii. 194, "that the introduction of such vicarious baptism is imputed to Marcion, to whose simple evangelical spirit such a superstition was altogether unsuited."

far as the language is concerned, might properly enough be described as "baptized for the dead." Another superstitious practice which prevailed in the ancient church, was that of having baptism administered in cemeteries[1] over the ashes of those Christians who had been martyrs, or had been otherwise distinguished by their christian excellence, under the idea that, in some way or other, the persons baptized were to derive advantage from their merits or their prayers.[2] Supposing the reference to be to this rite, the words should be rendered, as they may be, "over the dead." The third superstitious practice, of which we have an example in the case of Constantine the Great, was that of deferring baptism till death was apparently just at hand, that the new-made Christian might carry into eternity the saving efficacy of baptism, uninjured by any posterior act of sin.[3] It has been supposed that this class of persons might have been said to be "baptized for dead persons"—baptized as dying, and all but dead.[4] It may be doubted whether the case of this last class of persons could have been, in consistency with the language, described by the words rendered "baptized for the dead." To the case of the two other classes the words are sufficiently appropriate. But there are two reasons for rejecting these interpretations, either of which would have been quite sufficient. In the first place, we have no reason to believe that any of these superstitious usages existed in the days of the apostle. It has justly been said, that it is far more likely that they originated from a misapprehension of this verse, than that this verse contains an allusion to them as already existing, and existing at Corinth; and, in the second place, if they had existed, most assuredly the apostle would not have given them the kind of sanction which they must have received, had he re-

[1] Euseb. Hist. Ecc., iv. 15. Aug. de Civitate, xx. 9.

[2] J. G. Vossius, Luther, Piscator, G. J. Vossius, Glassius, Amyraut.

[3] Epiphanius, Calvin, Aretius, Sadeel, Marloratus, P. Martyr, Hyperius.

[4] "Non tantum baptizantur qui adhuc victuros se putant, sed qui mortem habent ante oculos."—CALVIN.

ferred to them in such terms as those before us. It is to no purpose to say that this is but what is called an "argumentum ad hominem"—an argument on the principles of an opponent, without granting these principles. Would the apostle, supposing such practices as payments for securing deliverance from the pains of purgatory, prayers for the dead, or extreme unction, to have prevailed in his time, have availed himself of the arguments of this kind, which these superstitious customs would have furnished him, for a future life? No; the reception of even truth, on false evidence, is not the faith he seeks to produce. He did not endeavour to confirm a true conviction by sanctioning a false one; he always sought to promote an honest cause by honest means. He had "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but, by manifestation of the truth, commending himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." He who said of the Galatians, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain,"[1] would assuredly have said something still stronger to those who were engaging in such practices as have been referred to above, instead of passing the matter over in silence—thus leading them to suppose that he did not disapprove of them.[2] Besides, these interpretations both break the close connection between the first and second branches of the paragraph. What connection is there between, 'Why do some people get themselves baptized in the room of their dead friends? or why do they receive baptism over the graves of the pious departed? or why do they

[1] 2 Cor. iv. 1, 2. Gal. iv. 10, 11.

[2] There was another superstitious practice in reference to baptism in the ancient, as distinguished from the primitive church, noticed in the 18th canon of the Council of Carthage (Zonaras, c. 407),—"Si quis clericus ordinetur, debet admoneri, ut servet decreta, et ut mortuorum cadaveribus Eucharistia non detur nec baptismus." This, however, is baptism *of* the dead, not baptism *for* the dead. This practice is by Theophylact ascribed to the Marcionites. According to him, they placed a living man under the bed of the dead man, to give the response to the baptismal ἐπερωτήματα.

delay baptism till the hour of death?' what connection is there between these questions and that which follows—"And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?"[1]

By a fourth class of interpreters, among whom we rank ourselves, the apostle has been supposed to refer to the ordinance of christian baptism, that ordinance in which, in that age, as still in heathen countries in our own, a public profession of Christianity was generally first made. This class of interpreters, agreeing in the meaning and reference of the word "baptized," have yet differed very much among themselves as to the meaning of the term, "the dead;" and of the phrase, "for the dead;" and of the whole expression, "baptized for the dead." Some have supposed the word "dead" to be neuter, and consider the apostle as saying, '"What shall they do who are baptized"—*i. e.*, who have submitted to baptism, and taken all the responsibilities which it involves—"for these dead things"—these vain statements about Christ's resurrection and their own,—what are they to do? What a foolish bargain they have made! Why have they been baptized "for such dead things"—for dead things they are, if the dead rise not?'[2] The sense this interpretation brings out is good, but the process is most unnatural. Nothing but the impossibility of getting a true

[1] There is an opinion scarcely worth mentioning, but from respect to its very learned and acute author, Beza: *βαπτιζόμενοι* is considered as in the middle voice, and the phrase is rendered 'performing ablutions for the dead,' such as those performed on the dead body of Tabitha, Acts ix. 37; and the question is equivalent to—'Why take so much care of dead bodies, if they are not to rise?' This is a very feeble argument, and does not at all connect itself with what follows. The view of the various opinions on this text contained in "Mulleri Dissertatio," in the second volume of the "Thesaurus Theologico-Philologicus," is worth consulting; as also the digest of them given by Spanheim, in his "Exercitatio," Opp. iii.,—Gerdes, in his "Meletemata Sacra,"—and Heydenreich, in his "Commentary." Perhaps the most extravagant conjecture which has been made (and that is saying a great deal), is that of Facius (Coburg, 1793), who refers the *βαπτιζόμενοι* to those who dive in the sea to bring up the dead bodies of those who have been lost by shipwreck. Alexander (John) would transpose the clauses thus: "What shall they do who, if the dead rise not, are baptized for the dead?" The trajection is harsh, and does not materially lessen the difficulty.

[2] Jehné, Krause.

and appropriate sense, by a simpler process, could reconcile us to its adoption. Others consider "the dead" in the plural—as, by a figure of speech, standing for "him that died," Jesus Christ; and who, according to the hypothesis the apostle is opposing, is still dead: "Baptized on account of, for the sake of, Jesus Christ."[1] This also is unnatural; and it does not mend the matter to make out a literal plural by adding John the Baptist to his Lord.[2] Others suppose "for the dead" equivalent to "for the resurrection of the dead," or "for the faith of the resurrection of the dead;"[3] others think that it is equivalent to, "for the advantage of the dead"—the "dead in trespasses and sins"—the Jews and Gentiles. All these are mere arbitrary conjectures, and even if admitted, go but a short way towards the explication of the passage. Others, with more appearance of reason, consider "for the dead" as equivalent to "for dead," "as if they were dead." 'What will they do who are baptized as if they were dead—as dead with Christ? or, as if they were, to use the apostle's own words,[4] "appointed to death?" Why are they then baptized, as if doomed to death?[5] How is it that men submit to take a place that is so hazardous, if there be no resurrection?' This comes near to what, we apprehend, is the truth, but is not the right way of getting at it. "*The* dead" are a particular class of *the* dead,—"the dead in the Lord,"—they who have fallen asleep in Christ. A great interpreter, lately deceased,[6] refers the description to men coming forward to join the christian standard "in behalf of the dead"—*i. e.*, 'that the number of the elect may the

[1] A. Rivet, A. Morus, Olearius, Hoogeveen, Fabricius, Seiler, Bullerius, Whitby. Winer, a high authority, says, "The usage of the language admits this."—*Gram.*, Part iii., § 27, 2.

[2] Vater. [3] Chrysostom, Hammond. [4] ἐπιθανάτιοι.

[5] Jerome. Cameron justly says of this interpretation, "Male redditur ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν *quasi mortui*, neque enim id patitur phrasis Græca, neque ullo scripturæ loco, vel auctoris probati testimonio probari potest."

[6] Olshausen.

sooner be completed, and the coming of the Lord hastened.' This is obviously very fanciful.[1] It is a much more probable interpretation which supposes that, by those who are "baptized for the dead," are meant those who, moved by the manifestation of faith and patience made by dying, especially martyred Christians, have been induced publicly to own Christ as their Lord, by submitting to baptism;[2] "baptized for the dead," in this case, being equivalent to 'having embraced Christianity, moved by the faith and patience of those who have died in the Lord.' But even this is not satisfactory. There is a want of emphasis, according to it, in the second question, "Why then are they baptized for the dead?"

The interpretation which appears to me to have the greatest recommendations, and the fewest and smallest drawbacks, is that which renders "for the dead," "in the place of the dead," and which considers those baptized, in the place of the dead, as descriptive of those who, notwithstanding the persecutions, even to death, that Christians were exposed to, were continually coming forward to the baptismal font to take, as it were, the oath of allegiance to Him who is both Lord and Christ, and to assume the places in his ranks which death, sometimes violent death, had made vacant.[3] This offers no violence to the language, the particle translated "for" often signifying "in the place of,"—*e. g.*, Philemon, 13, "That in *thy stead*"—the same word as here—"he might have ministered to me." 2 Cor. v. 20, "We pray you in *Christ's stead*"—the same word as here. It embodies a true, a striking, an appropriate sentiment.

[1] Olshausen afterwards expresses, as he well might, a doubt as to this reference to the κλῆρωμα of the church, and seems to have rested in the view which we have been led to prefer. "It commends itself," he says, "by its simplicity."

[2] Spanheim, whose elaborate "Exercitatio" well deserves perusal, *Opera Theol.*, Dom. iii., p. 578. Eusebius (*Hist.* ii. 9) tells us that the accuser of James the Greater, struck by his constancy, became a Christian; and, professing his faith, died along with him he had accused. "Plures efficimur," says Tertullian, "quoties metimur a vobis. Semen est sanguis Christianorum."

[3] Junius, Heumann, Le Clerc, Deylingius, Döderlein, Ellys, Doddridge, Newcome, Scott.

'Otherwise, what will they do who are baptised in the place of those who have died—died *in* the faith of Christ—died *for* the faith of Christ,—who have, in the face of all the sacrifices to be made—all the hardships to be endured—all the losses to be sustained—all the disgrace to be incurred—all the hazards to be braved—come forward, and, at the baptismal font, proclaimed their readiness to fill up the empty places in the army of Christ, and to live and die in his service?[1] What will these men do? Will they, ought they, to persevere, if there be no resurrection of the dead? Is it right that they should make such sacrifices for vanity and a lie? "Why are they then baptized for the dead," if the dead rise not?[2] Is not their conduct utterly unaccountable and absurd?' And is there any satisfactory answer to the question, "Why are they then baptized for the dead?" but this? They know that the dead in the Lord are blessed, and they are willing, like them, to die, in order to being blessed, like them, in attaining to the resurrection from the dead. And, as this sentiment is in itself appropriate, it is just what suits the place in the apostle's animated address. You have a gradation thus: If there be no resurrection, what an unaccountable part are the converts to Christianity acting, who are pressing forward to take the place of the dead! What an unaccountable part are we apostles acting, who are in jeopardy every hour! What an unaccountable part am I, Paul, acting, who "die daily," and "after the manner of men have fought with beasts at Ephesus?" We have thus endeavoured, it may be with undue minuteness, to illustrate the first part of these three conclu-

[1] "Dubium cuiquam esse possit, num eo quo hæc scriberet tempore apostolus frequens adeo et solenne martyrium esset. Sed vero quis neget illustria pridem fuisse Stephani et Jacobi majoris exempla? Quis dubitet inter tot persecutiones, tot motus a Judæis et Gentilibus excitatos in Judæa, Palæstina, Syria, Asia, Ægypto, Italia, etc., quin plurimi ob fidem evangelii oppressi jam tum fuerint atque è vivis sublati?"—SPANHEIM.

[2] "Griesbach has connected εἰ ὅλως νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται with what precedes. Lachmann" (as I think properly) "connects it with what follows. The phrase τί καί, etc., in the former case, seems inappropriate."—OLSHAUSEN.

sions.[1] Let us now look at the other two; they will not detain us so long.

§ 3. *If there be no resurrection, it is absurd to propagate Christianity.*

"And why stand we[2] in jeopardy every hour?" "We," as contrasted with "those who are baptized," are the apostles and other ministers of the church, as distinguished from Christians at large. "*We*," says the apostle, "are in jeopardy" in consequence of our principles as Christians, and our position as christian teachers and leaders; "we are in jeopardy every hour." If you want a full commentary on these words, read the Acts of the Apostles, with notes from the Epistles. If you want a condensed compendium of the truth, take in the words of the apostle in a former part of this epistle to the Corinthian church. "I think God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place." "Reviled, persecuted, defamed: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day."[3] And if there be no resurrection of the dead, why are we thus constantly in jeopardy? why do we voluntarily place ourselves thus constantly in danger? If there be a resurrection of the dead, we act like wise men; if there be no resurrection, we are the most foolish of fools.'[4]

[1] "Whether this be the meaning, or whatever else be, doubtless the apostle's argument was good and intelligible to the Corinthians."—M. HENRY. Valckenäer's conjecture, that ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν is a transcriber's mistake for ἀπ' ἐργων νεκρῶν, is ingenious; but it is a mere conjecture, and there is no point in the interrogation on this supposition.

[2] "καὶ ἡμεῖς—'We also,' the apostles. Not till the following passage does Paul speak of himself alone."—DE WETTE.

[3] 1 Cor. iv. 9, 11-13.

[4] How different Paul's confidence in the future state from Cicero's uncertainty:—"Inhæret in mentibus quasi seculorum quoddam augurium futurorum,

The apostle now applies the same principle to himself. 'Why do I, Paul, sustain such sufferings, and expose myself to such dangers, if there be no resurrection of the dead? "I protest by your rejoicing in Christ Jesus, I die daily;" and why do I do so?' There are two things here,—an assertion, and a confirmation of it by a solemn asseveration.

"I die daily."[1] These words, taken by themselves, might signify, what they have sometimes been, by mistake, represented as signifying, 'I every day feel and act like a dying man—a man who may die this day.' I have no doubt Paul did so, and we ought to do so too. But what he says here is, 'I am every day in danger of a violent death. I am not sure of my life for an hour; and it is my attachment to Christianity that imperils it.' The following passages explain this declaration, and show how true it was to the letter:—"In our trouble that came on us in Asia, we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life; for we had the sentence of death in ourselves." "Bearing about with us the dying of the Lord Jesus in our mortal bodies." "As dying, yet behold we live; as chastened, yet not killed." "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, *in deaths oft.*[2] Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and naked-

idque in maximis ingeniis altissimisque animis et extitit maxime et apparet facillime. Quo quidem dempto, quis tam esset amens, qui semper in laboribus et periculis viveret."—*Tusc. Quæst.*

[1] The words of Flaccus, in Philo, illustrate this phrase:—"καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν, μᾶλλον δὲ ὥραν, προαποθνήσκω, πολλοὺς θανάτους ἀνθ' ἑνὸς τοῦ τελευταίου."

[2] A similar expression is to be found, Psal. xliv. 22.

ness." [1] Thus did Paul "die daily." So much for his assertion; now for his confirmatory asseveration.

"I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus." This is a clause which I find nowhere satisfactorily explained. Interpreters seem to have thought it enough to say, 'It is a strong affirmation, equivalent to an oath.' The apostle appeals to something as a confirmation of his assertion that he died daily. Now, what does he appeal to, and how does his appeal confirm his declaration? He appeals to the Corinthian Christians' "rejoicing" or glorying, as the subject of gloriation, which HE had in Christ Jesus. That seems strange language. We should have expected either '*my* rejoicing or glorying which *I* have in Christ Jesus,' or, '*your* glorying which *ye* have in Christ Jesus.' I believe the true way of bringing out the meaning is to repeat the word "glorying" thus—"your glorying"—the glorying "which I have in Christ Jesus." That which the Corinthians and the apostle gloried in was the same thing. But what was this common cause of glorying to the Corinthians and the apostle? It was, I apprehend, his labours and sufferings in the cause of Christ. Thus we find him saying to the Ephesians, "I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory,"—not the same word, indeed, as here, but one of similar import. The apostle's labours and sufferings were ground of glorying to the christian churches, and they were so to himself also. Speaking of them, he says, "I have whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ. I will not glory but in my infirmities." "Most gladly do I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest on me. I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's

[1] 2 Cor. i. 8, 9; xi. 23-28. This catalogue of sufferings is poetically abridged by an unknown mediæval writer in the following verse:—

"Verbera, vincla, famem, lapides, rabiemque ferarum,
Carceris illuviem, virgas, tormenta, catenas,
Naufragium, lacrymas, serpentis dira venena,
Stigmata non timuit portare in corpore Christi."—PSEUDO DAMASUS.

sake."[1] This, then, is the rejoicing, the gloriation, the ground of glorying, which the Corinthians and the apostle had. To his labours and sufferings in the cause of Christ, in which both they and he gloried, and with which they were well acquainted, he appeals for the truth of his strong declaration, "I die daily;" or, as he expresses it in the Second Epistle, "I am always delivered to death for Jesus' sake."[2]

The apostle then mentions one of the remarkable sufferings to which his attachment to the cause of Christ had exposed him, and, in submitting to which, he had acted a very strange part, if there were no future life—no resurrection of the dead. "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me?" It has been doubted whether the apostle here refers to an actual combat with wild beasts,[3] to which the fury of the populace had exposed him,—of which, as of many other important events of his life, we have no record,—or whether he refers to the popular tumult, of which we have an account in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where the Ephesian mob behaved, as mobs generally do, very much like beasts that want discourse of reason.[4] The

[1] 2 Cor. xii. 9. Eph. iii. 13.

[2] 2 Cor. iv. 11. I thought I was alone in this interpretation. On consulting Leigh, I found that he had had a glimpse of what seems to me undoubtedly the true meaning of this asseveration. "Obtestatio erat, non juramentum, q. d., Solicitudines meæ et afflictiones quas patior propter Christum si loqui possint, testarentur, quod quam certe glorier in Christo, tam certe moriar quotidie."

[3] We know that being compelled to fight with wild beasts was a punishment for criminals, and that such fights were converted into a public entertainment in the amphitheatres, as Prudentius, in his Hamartigenia, says,—

> "Sanguinis humani spectacula publicus edit
> Concessus, legesque jubent venale parari
> Supplicium, quo membra hominum discerpta cruentis
> Morsibus oblectent hilarem de funere plebem."

We know, too, from Eusebius and Tertullian, that at a somewhat later date—"Christianos ad leones," "Christianos ad bestias," was a frequent cry among the pagan rabble. Paul's Roman citizenship would have prevented him from being sentenced to such a punishment; and if he had, by popular violence, been exposed to it, it seems likely we should have had an account of it.

[4] It is common to compare cruel unreasonable men with wild beasts,—Psal.

latter mode of interpretation derives some probability from the words of Ignatius, in his Epistle to the Romans, where, after speaking of his expectation to be exposed to wild beasts in their city, he adds, "All the way, from Syria to Rome, I fight with wild beasts; being chained to ten leopards—that is, to a file of soldiers."[1] I am rather disposed to agree with those who think that the apostle speaks, not of what had taken place at Ephesus, but what might have taken place—what was likely to have taken place—what was intended to take place. '*If* I had fought with beasts at Ephesus—if I had entered into the theatre there, when the disciples suffered me not, and if there the resistless mob had, as they probably would have done, ordered me "to the lions," what profit should I have had of all my labours and sufferings, terminating in a death so dreadful, if there be no resurrection of the dead?'[2] In this case the expression, "after the manner of men," must be explained, "as

xxii. 13, 21; lxxiv. 19 (Sept.) Philo says, "It is only the just man who deserves the name, Man. The unjust man is but a wild beast under a human form." The Greek poet Epimenides calls the Cretans *κακὰ θηρία*, Tit. i. 12. Lactantius calls tyrants "malæ bestiæ."—*Inst.* v. 23; *De Morte*, 2. The enemies of Christ are symbolised by *θηρία* in the Apocalypse. *Θηριώδεις τύραννοι* is a well-known Greek phrase. Paul, speaking probably of deliverance from condemnation by Nero at his first appearance, says, "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion," 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17. Certainly Nero was a *θηρίον*.

[1] "'Από Συρίας μέχρι 'Ρώμης θηριομαχῶ διὰ γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας, ἐνδεδεμένος δέκα λεοπάρδοις, ὅ ἐστι στρατιωτικὸν τάγμα."—IGNAT. ad Rom. v. "*Θηριομαχίαν καλεῖ τὴν πρὸς 'Ιουδαίους καὶ Δημήτριον μάχην. Τί γὰρ οὗτοι θηρίων διέφερον;*"—THEOPHYLACT. It is an ingenious conjecture, but nothing more, of Scaliger, and MARKLAND in BOWYER, that *ἀνθρώτον* has been written for *ἀνθρώπων*,—'I have contended with men as with wild beasts.' The stories which Nicephorus and Theodoret tell of an encounter Paul had with wild beasts in the theatre at Ephesus stand in need of confirmation.—See Witsii Meletemata-Leidensia, *Vit. Paul.*, viii. 23. Whatever it was that Paul refers to, the striking passage in 2 Cor. i. 8-10 must be considered as a parallel illustration.

[2] This is the view which Calmet, Zeltner, and Gerdes take. That the construction will admit of the translation which this exegesis demands, appears from Matt. xi. 21, xxiii. 30; Luke xix. 42; John iv. 10, v. 46; Rom. vii. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 31; Gal. i. 10, iii. 21. The aorist is not unfrequently used as the pluperfect,—Mark v. 8; Luke vii. 21; Matt. xxviii. 2. Whoever wishes to see a full account of the various views respecting this *θηριομαχία* may consult the dissertations of Kindler, in the second volume of the "Thesaurus Theologico-Philologicus;" and of Lintrupius and Hagen, in the second volume of the "Thesaurus Novus Theologico-Philologicus;" and Witsii Vita Pauli, in his "Meletemata."

man intended." 'If, as was man's intention, I had fought with beasts at Ephesus, what should I have been the better?[1] should not I only have proved my folly, by exposing myself to such dangers for what could make me no recompense?'

§ 4. *If there be no resurrection, man's wisest course is to devote himself to a life of pleasure.*

The words, "If the dead rise not," may be, and we rather think ought to be, connected with those which follow, not with those which precede them. "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die." On the supposition that there is no resurrection, exhortations to constancy in the faith of Christ amid persecution are insulting mockery. The morality of the Epicureans and the Sadducees is in that case true philosophy, sound wisdom. The apostle gives the sum of that morality in a few very expressive words, borrowed from Isaiah xxii. 13. It is at greater length most beautifully described by an apocryphal writer:—"Our life is short, yet tedious, and in the death of man is no remedy; neither was there ever known any man to return from the grave: for we are all born at an adventure, and we shall hereafter be as if we had never been: for the breath in our nostrils is as smoke, and a little spark is the moving of our heart, which being extinguished, our body shall be turned into ashes, and our spirit shall vanish as the soft air; and our name shall be forgotten in time, and no man shall have our works in remembrance; and our life shall pass away like the haze of a cloud, and shall be dispersed as a mist that is driven away with the beams of the sun, and overcome with the heat of it. For our time is a very shadow, that passeth away; and after our end there is no returning; for it is fast sealed, so that no man cometh again. Come on, therefore, let us

[1] Jac. ii. 14.

enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth. Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments, and let no flower of the spring pass by us. Let us crown ourselves with rose-buds before they be withered. Let none of us go without his part of our voluptuousness. Let us leave tokens of our joyfulness in every place; for this is our portion, and our lot is this."[1] If there be no resurrection, it is wisdom to make the most of the only life we are ever to enjoy.

The apostle places this strongly before the minds of the Corinthians, who might be disposed to listen to the speculations of those who said there was no resurrection, and yet professed to hold the faith of Christ. 'This,' says the apostle, 'is where these speculations will land you. Are you prepared for this? "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."[2] Be not imposed on by fair words and ingenious speculations. Be on your guard. These men are deceivers. The less you have to do with them the better—the safer—for you. They can do you no good;—they may do you much harm. Error and vice are contagious.' "Evil communications corrupt good manners." This is a quotation from an ancient Greek poet. "Evil communications" here, describe such discussions as the Sadducees and the Epicureans, and their admirers among the Corinthians, delighted to engage in. The sentiment is, 'The dissemination of erroneous opinions has an immoral tendency. A denial of a future life naturally leads to licentiousness; and, indeed, all error has an affinity for all sin: they are children of the same father, just as truth and holiness are,—only, in the first case the father is the devil, and in the latter, God.

In the case of the Corinthians who were in hazard from

[1] Wisd. ii. 1-9.

[2] These words, according to Jerome, are a quotation from THAIS, a dramatic poem by Menander, an ancient Greek poet. If so, Lachmann has done right in replacing χρηστ' in the text. Tertullian translates the adage in a Latin trimeter,—"Bonos corrumpunt mores congressus mali."

these pestilent opinions, the apostle was afraid there were moral causes at work, which gave a power to these infidel speculations they did not intrinsically possess. They had fallen into a state of spiritual stupor, or intoxication, in which such dreams as that there was no resurrection were likely enough to find entrance into the mind. "Awake," says the apostle, "awake to righteousness;"[1] or rather, '*justly—thoroughly* arouse—yourselves.' 'Become sober:' that is the exact force of the word. 'Look at things as they really are. Look at the truth and its evidence respecting the resurrection of Christ, and the resurrection of his people, and not at the speculations of a vain, a godless, unholy, earthly, devilish philosophy.' 'Thoroughly arouse yourselves, and do not err:' that is the original force of the word rendered "sin not." We are prone to error, and we need constantly to guard against it. The success of error is owing chiefly to the state of the mind into which it seeks entrance. If we keep ourselves thoroughly sober, we are in little danger of being imposed on by its illusions. But if we allow our minds to be intoxicated,—if our hearts, as our Lord says, be at any time "overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life,"—if we suffer worldly lusts to obtain the mastery of reason and conscience,—we are in a fit state for welcoming delusions, which may enable us in some measure to justify to ourselves a course on which inclination, not principle, has induced us to enter.

The prevalence of such absurd, unholy speculations, among the Corinthians, convinced the deep-sighted apostle that some of them were not "rooted and grounded" in the faith they professed. "Some" of you "have not the knowledge

[1] ἐκνήψατε δικαίως may be very well translated by Livy's words, "Nunc expergiscere vere."—Lib. i., cap. 41. "δικαίως hic non est *juste* moraliter sed modaliter, *plene, integre, perfecte*."—E. Schmid. "ἐκνήφειν proprie de ebriis dicitur qui a somno demum sunt sobrii. Loquitur hic de mentis sobrietate ad quam vult illos redire qui multis vanis speculationibus erant quodammodo inebriati."—Beza.

of God." 'Certainly those of you who say that there is no resurrection, "do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."' There is no God but one; and that one God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has "brought again from the dead," Him, "the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant;" and who, "according to his abundant mercy, hath," through that resurrection, "begotten us again to a living hope,"—"to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away;" the God who raised up from the dead our Lord Jesus, who "was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification," and who "shall also quicken our mortal bodies, because of his Spirit who dwelleth in us." I believe all error in religion, speculative and practical, may be traced up to ignorance or mistake with regard to the character of God.

If any in the Corinthian church had not the knowledge of God, they were deeply—doubly—to blame: to blame for not having it, for they had had in abundance the means of obtaining it; and to blame for making a profession of having it, when they had it not. We need not wonder, then, that the apostle should add, "I speak this to your shame."[1] It is a shame to members of a christian church not to have the knowledge of God, and it is a shame to a christian church to have such members as plainly have not the knowledge of God. Nothing but a credible profession of the knowledge of God should open the way into a christian church; and whenever a man makes it plain, from his opinions or conduct, that he has imposed on the church, perhaps on himself, in professing to have the knowledge of God, when indeed he had it not, the sooner the door out of the church is opened to him the better it is for both parties. Oh, that this principle were but more deeply impressed on our hearts! Ignorance of God is disgraceful to

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 14; vi. 5.

members of churches, and to the churches of which such persons are members.

The practical use we ought to make of the passage we have been considering, may be summed up in a few words. Let us seek to be well established in the doctrine of the resurrection to life, and in that of the resurrection of Christ, on which it is founded. Without this, how shall we be able to stand in the evil day of trial, to make a consistent and honourable profession of religion, and to persevere to the end, "stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord"? Let us "cease from hearing the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." Let us avoid, as we would the pestilence, familiar intercourse with sceptical, profligate, or ungodly men. Let us be jealous of all speculation which goes to loosen the foundations of religious and moral truth and obligation; and let us beware of seeking religious guidance from men who, in whatever science they may excel, make it apparent, by their habitual temper and behaviour, that they know not God. Let us be deeply impressed with the criminality and the shamefulness of ignorance of God, in our circumstances. Let us determine that, whatever we may be ignorant of, we shall not be ignorant of *God*. It is with *Him* we have to do. Our highest duties are those we owe to *Him;* we are entirely dependent on *Him*. The highest purpose of our intellectual nature was to make us capable of knowing *Him;* and it is only in the degree in which that object is gained, that we can be good, wise, and happy. It is "life eternal to know the only true God." Let us remember that it is only *in* Christ, *by* Christ, that God can be satisfactorily, savingly, known to the children of men; and let us resolve, with the apostle, to "count all things loss for this excellent knowledge." Let us carefully improve every means for increasing the extent and accuracy of our knowledge; and let us "follow on to know Him," rejoicing in the assurance, that in the measure that we really know Him, we shall be con-

formed to Him in holiness and happiness,—and looking for, and hasting to, that "blessed hope" which will be realised to us at the "glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus,"—the "seeing him as he is," and the being "like him,"—the "beholding HIS face in righteousness," and the being "satisfied with HIS likeness."

PART V.—OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 35-41.—"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what bodies do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory."

THE section of the apostle's dissertation on the resurrection of the dead which comes now before us for consideration, is occupied with a reply to the cavils of those who doubted or denied that doctrine.[1] These cavils seem to have been principally of two kinds: such as originated in the supposed impossibility of restoring life to what is dead; and such as originated in the difficulty of comprehending how, on the supposition that it is not impossible, such a change is to be effected. Both these objections are stated in the 35th verse. "But," notwithstanding all I have said, "some man,"—some one of those "some among you who say there is no resurrection of the dead,"—some such man "will say,"

[1] A most elaborate and judicious exposition of the paragraph, from verse 35 to verse 55, is to be found in the sixth dissertation in the first volume of Morus' "Dissertationes Theologicæ et Philologicæ." Amyraut's dissertation, in the fourth part of that valuable work, "Syntagma Thesium Theologicarum in Academia Salmuriensi," is well worth reading, as are also his remarks in his very pleasing little book "on the Evidence of Things not Seen," Discourse Third.

presenting his objections in the form of questions which he thinks unanswerable, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?"

§ 1. *The first objection—that from the impossibility of the resurrection—answered.*

The first objection, as appears plainly from the reply to it, contained in the 36th verse, is founded on the supposed impossibility of the resurrection, and is equivalent to—'How can the *dead* be raised up?' The emphatic word is *dead.* 'How can the *dead* be made to live again? Life is extinct in them.' It is of importance to recall the fact, that they who denied the resurrection equally denied the future life: they did not admit that the soul is a separate substance from the body. Life, in their estimation, was just a peculiar state of the body, which, when once destroyed, in their apprehension never had been reproduced, and never could be reproduced. The difficulty here referred to does not seem to be that originating in the decomposition of the body,—that appears included under the second objection, "With what body do they"—the dead—"come?"—*i. e.*, come out of the grave, or return to the living world. The objection here would seem to be equally to the return to life of a body just dead, if really dead, as to that of a body committed ages ago to the earth. In consequence of not noticing this, interpreters have sought, and supposed that they had found, something in the answer to the objection which is really not there. The objection is just—'How can the dead live again?'

This objection might have been replied to by asking the question which the apostle proposed with such effect on another occasion,—"Why should it be thought an incredible thing that GOD should raise the dead?" or by saying to the objectors, in the words of our Lord, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." Can He

who gave life, and has withdrawn it, find any difficulty, if He think fit, to restore it? "with man it is impossible; but with God all things are possible;" or, by quoting the Rabbinical saying, "He who made to be that which was not, can certainly make that to be again which once was."[1] The apostle, however, according to the wisdom given him, answers the objection in a somewhat different way. "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die."

"Thou fool"[2] is just equivalent to, 'That is a very silly question. "Professing thyself to be wise"—putting forward pretensions to superior knowledge and wisdom—thou art become, thou plainly showest thyself to be, a fool. One of the most ordinary appearances in nature may furnish you with a reply to your fancied unanswerable question, "How can the dead be raised up?"—may show you that reviviscence, so far from being an impossibility, is an event of daily occurrence.'

"That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die;" or rather, 'have died,' or 'be dead.'[3] It has been common,

[1] Prudentius, in one of his poems, introduces God as thus speaking:—

——————"Possum renovare favillas
Antiquam in faciem. Nec desperanda potestas:
Qui potui formare novum, reparabo peremptum."—*In Symmach.*, ii. 192.

[2] Lachmann's reading, ἄφρων, has strong internal evidence. "ἄφρων merito sic eos vocat qui miracula fieri non credunt quum natura ipsa plena sit miraculis, sed quæ sui frequentia migrant in nomen aliud."—GROTIUS.

[3] "ὁ Θεός σοι πολλὰ τεκμήρια (τῆς ἀναστάσεως) ἐπιδείκνυσιν εἰς τὸ πιστεύειν αὐτῷ. Εἰ γὰρ βούλει, καταγόησον τὴν τῶν καιρῶν καὶ ἡμερῶν καὶ νυκτῶν τελευτὴν, πῶς καὶ αὐτὰ τελευτᾷ καὶ ἀνίσταται. Τί δὲ οὐχὶ καὶ ἡ τῶν σπερμάτων καὶ καρπῶν γινομένη ἐξανάστασις, καὶ τοῦτο εἰς τὴν χρῆσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων; Εἰ γὰρ τύχοι εἰπεῖν, κόκκος σίτου ἢ τῶν λοιπῶν σπερμάτων· ἐπὰν βληθῇ εἰς τὴν γῆν, πρῶτον ἀποθνήσκει καὶ λύεται, εἶτα ἐγείρεται καὶ γίνεται στάχυς."—THEOPH. ANTIOCH., ad Autolyc., lib. i. "Tota hujus mundi administratio testimonium est resurrectionis futuræ. Videmus certe hiemis tempore vel adventu, arbores spoliari pomis, nudari foliis: sed eas etiam verno tempore speciem resurrectionis exprimere: quæ primum quidem incipiunt turgere in gemmis, tunc ornari in floribus, vestiri et foliis et postmodum pomis gravari. Interrogo te, infidelis homo qui de resurrectione dubitas, ubi sunt ista quæ tempore quo Deus disposuit producuntur? Dic mihi ubi latitant antequam producantur? quæ nusquam quidem videntur: sed tamen Deus qui omnipotens est et ea ex nihilo condidit, secreta sua virtute producit. Hinc jam ad campos et prata respicite, quæ æstate transacta herbis suis spoliantur et floribus, et nuda remanent ipsa spatia terrarum: sed iterum verno tempore

indeed almost all but universal, to suppose that here, as well as in that oracle of our Lord, which is in some respects parallel, in which the necessity of his death, in order to the multiplication of his followers, is indicated under the figure of the necessity of a corn of wheat falling into the ground in a dead state, in order to its being productive—"Unless a corn of wheat falling into the earth be dead, it abideth alone; but if it be dead, it bringeth forth much fruit;"[1]—it has been common to suppose, that the death referred to in both these passages is the change which takes place in the seed *after* it is put into the earth—the dissolution of the outer coats of the seed, which takes place in order to the germ taking root and springing up. There are many strong objections to this mode of interpretation. First, this change in the seed does not correspond to the death, but to the decomposition, of the body; secondly, there is an inversion of the order of nature, which is death and burial, not burial and death,—men are buried because they are dead—they are not buried that they may die; thirdly, in the case of our Lord there was no such decomposition of the body, for he saw no corruption,—which, according to the ordinary interpretation, is symbolised by what is called the death of the seed in the ground; and, finally, there is no meeting the difficulty here mooted, which is not, 'How can the decomposed body be recomposed?' but, 'How can the dead be raised to life?'[2]

revestiuntur, et novo ubique germine incipiente lætatur agricola. Certè herba, quæ ante vixit et moritur, rursus reviviscit ex semine: sic etiam et nostrum corpus reviviscet ex pulvere."—AUGUSTIN.

[1] John xii. 24.

[2] "Non sepeliunt homines ut moriantur, sed quod, vita defuncti, in vivis esse desierunt, ideo exanime corpus humant. Ita nec granum terræ condunt ut moriatur; sed ut defunctum morte eripiatur et reviviscit. In terræ gremio neque moritur neque corrumpitur. Mortem obiit atque decessit jam ante cum e ramo discederet aut ex arista excuteretur. In quo statu mortis semen exanime permanet, quamdiu in penu granariove adservatur atque reconditur, omni vi et vigore destitutum. Terræ vero mandatum illico se vindicat ex hac lethali conditione inque vitam revertitur."—JEHNE. "Invertit Paulus objectionem: mors vivificationem non impedit sed prægreditur et præmonstrat, tanquam sementis messem."—BENGEL. The view given in the text is very clearly stated, and ingeniously supported, in an article in the Christian Repository,

The fact in natural history to which both our Lord and the apostle refer is this, that, when there is progress from a lower to a higher degree or species of life, often—probably usually—a corresponding species of death intervenes. It is not the blossom nor the seed, when full of vegetable succulence and life, that, when sown, proceeds onward to a higher kind of life, as a separate plant, bearing blossoms and fruits. Cast such a living blossom or seed into the earth, and you will see no more of it—it will utterly perish. But let the seed fully ripen—let it become dead-ripe, so as to lose its connection with the living plant, and, to all appearance, be destitute of vegetable life—let it even remain in this state in the granary for many years—yet take this dead seed and cast it into the earth, and it will receive life, and show itself alive, and become something of more importance in the vegetable world than it ever could have become if it had not thus died. Instead of its having died being an obstacle to its attaining a higher life, it is the necessary condition of such a change. 'That which thou sowest is not quickened—could not be quickened—to its higher life, except it had been dead.'

There are analogous facts in the animal creation. The caterpillar could not rise to the higher life of the butterfly but by submitting to the death-like chrysalis state. It must lose one kind of life, in order to obtain another and higher kind of life. "The eagle does not mount to the skies till he has left in ruins the shell which covered and confined him." These facts in the vegetable and animal worlds are not proofs of the resurrection. The apostle was much too sound a logician to employ such means for such an end. But they furnish satisfactory answers to cavils. They shut the mouth of a self-conceited objector. 'Should the dead rise, it will not be an anomalous thing. It will be but a more remark-

vol. i., p. 27-33, by Mr Robert Johnston. The objections to it are forcibly put by two contributors, under the signatures of J. W. C. and A. T., in the same volume.

able instance of—what seems a law within certain limits—higher life springing out of the apparent extinction of lower life. I must have other evidence to make me believe that the dead *shall* rise: but these facts show that they *may* rise; at any rate they prove, that to object to the doctrine of the resurrection, when established by appropriate evidence, on the ground of its impossibility, is the part, not of a wise man, but of a fool.'

§ 2. *The second objection—that in reference to the mode of the resurrection—answered.*

But the apostle finds, in the vegetable economy of production from seed, a reply to the second, as well as to the first, objection: an answer to the question, "With what body do they come?"[1] as well as to the question, 'How do the dead rise?' "And"—besides—"that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be,[2] but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." Here the apostle begins his answer to the question, "With what body do they come?" which occupies the rest of the section. The question which these cavillers mooted was that of the identity of the resurrection-body. "With what body"—'with what kind of body—with the body laid in the grave? and, if not, with what other kind of body?' The question is the more interesting to us, as it still continues to be agitated. From the difficulties with which the subject seems encumbered, the infidel still endeavours to construct an argument against the reality, and indeed possibility, of the resurrection, and against the truth and divine origin of the book in which that doctrine is so plainly taught.

[1] "Viventes dicuntur μένειν, mortui ἀπελθεῖν, Psal. xc. 3, redivivi ἐλθεῖν: potius hic ἐλθεῖν quam ἐπιστρέφειν, propter summam istam novitatem."—GERDES.

[2] "Quod seminas, quodcunque id sit, non seminas certe plantam nasciturum."—HEYDENREICH.

Here, as in so many other cases, we have reason to regret the imperfection and ambiguity of human language. With equal truth, according to the idea we attach to that seemingly very plain, but really very difficult, word "same," we may deny and affirm the resurrection of the same body.[1] If the "same body" means a body formed of precisely the same particles of matter, then, to say the least of it, it is in the highest degree improbable—we might, perhaps, have safely used stronger language, and said it is demonstrably impossible—that the body restored at the resurrection shall be the same body that was laid in the grave; for the same particles of matter have, since the creation of the world, entered into the composition of many different human bodies. If to be the same body is to be possessed of precisely the same qualities, then the resurrection-body is certainly not the same that was possessed on earth, and parted with at death. The former wants some of the most characteristic qualities of the latter; and it has qualities which the latter never possessed. But if, by being the same body, we mean that there is a similar identity between the resurrection-body and the mortal body, that there is between the body of the same man in infancy and in old age,—as there is between the dead seed cast into the earth, and the living plant that springs from it,—then we assert that the christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body is the doctrine of the resurrection of the same body. He would be a rash rather than a bold man who should assert this to be impossible. It were, in effect, to assert his own omniscience in the same breath that he denies the Divine omnipotence—"making the weakness of the creature the measure of the strength of the Creator." *Such* an identity seems implied in the very name of a resurrection—a word which signifies the restoration of life to what once before possessed it—not the creation of

[1] Origen has expressed the truth on this subject very happily, when he says, "We shall hereafter have σῶμα τοῦτο μὲν, ἀλλ' οὐ τοιοῦτο,"—*idem, sed non ejusmodi*—the same, but not in the same state.

new matter to be quickened, or the giving life to formerly existing matter, which had never been in any way connected with the human spirit, which is henceforward to be its animating principle. It is countenanced by those passages of Scripture which represent death as a sleep; it is taught in those passages which describe the bodies of men as rising from the places where they were deposited at death; and declare that "the sea and the earth shall" respectively "give up their dead;" and it seems asserted in plain terms, when it is said that "what is sown in corruption, and dishonour, and weakness, shall be raised in incorruption, and glory, and power;" that "this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible put on incorruption;" and that "our vile bodies shall be so changed, as to be fashioned like unto our Lord's glorious body." [1]

To this extent the bodies to be restored at the resurrection, to those who have died in the Lord, shall be the same as those they possessed on the earth; but though the same in this point of view, they will be very different in others. And the apostle's object is to show, that objections against the resurrection of the dead, founded on the ground of a strict identity of the body to be raised, do not hold; and to unfold, to a certain extent, in what the difference between the present and the future bodies of the saints shall consist. There are two facts to which the apostle turns the attention of the Corinthians. The first is, the great difference there is between the dead seed sown, and the living plant which springs from it; and the second, the great diversity of forms which organised matter, consisting of the same elements, takes, according to the place it is intended to fill, and the purposes it is intended to serve; and he states that, in the resurrection of the dead, there will be found something analogous to these facts. Let us first look at the facts, and then inquire into the analogy.

[1] Acts vii. 60. John v. 28, 29. Rev. xx. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43. Phil. iii. 21.

As to the first fact, the apostle states, "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."[1] In sowing, we do not put into the ground a plant like that which we anticipate will spring up; we sow "bare grain"—the dead seed, without stalk, or leaves, or blossoms, or fruit. And what comes up? not dead bare grain, but a beautiful living plant, with such a body as God, according to the laws of vegetable life, is pleased to give it,—with absolute certainty, however, that the plant will belong to the same species as the seed, and, indeed, grow out of the individual seed laid in the ground.

Now for the analogy of this fact in the resurrection: for "so shall it be in the resurrection of the dead."[1] The body which shall rise shall not be the dead body laid in the grave; it shall be a living body, and a body as far superior in the qualities which belong to a human body, as the beautiful living plant is to the dead seed from which it sprung,—God, according to the law of the resurrection, established according to the good pleasure of his will, producing this body—a human body—not any other organism of matter—like that laid in the grave, and in some way produced from it.

Let us now look at the second fact—the diversified organisations of which matter is capable, fitting it for different purposes and different places,—"All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory[3] of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

[1] "Per vocem ἴδιον innuitur non *omnino aliud*, sed *id ipsum* excitari, quod satum est, quamvis transformatum in melius; non *materiæ* sed *formæ*, non in *essentialibus* sed in *accidentiis* duntaxat, inter plantam semenque ex quo efflorescat, dissimilitudinem ac diversitatem intercedere."—HEYDENREICH.

[2] "Non illud οὕτω καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν trahi debet unice ad fulgorem corporum cœlestium."—MORUS.

[3] "δόξα significat dignitatem, præstantiam, excellentiam; non = εἶδος, formam, figuram, aut claritatem, splendorem."—HEYDENREICH.

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory." Matter, consisting of a few very simple elements, admits of being organised, so as to serve very different purposes. The mode of the life of man, of beasts, of four-footed animals, of fishes, and of birds, is very different the one from the other; yet, out of the same kind of matter, fit vehicles and instruments of all these forms of life are constituted. We are not to understand "the celestial bodies"[1] as the same as "the spiritual bodies;" and "the terrestrial bodies" as "the natural bodies" mentioned in the following context. There are bodies in the visible heavens—such as the sun, moon, and stars; and there are bodies on the earth—collections of water, vast masses of rocks, lofty mountains, vegetable and mineral bodies. "Body" is here equivalent to organisation—unity composed of parts. The apostle had called the vegetable organisations bodies. He discriminates between celestial organisations and terrestrial organisations, and then notices the differences which exist even among the celestial organisations.

Let us now look at the analogy—"So is the resurrection of the dead." There will be a great difference between the present and the resurrection-body. There obviously may be. The body will be made to suit its place in heaven, and its purposes. It has been common[2] to suppose that the apostle meant to teach here, that, in the resurrection, there would be a diversity of glory in the bodies of individual saints, according to their comparative excellence. It may be that there shall be such a difference, but there does not appear to be any reference to that here. CALVIN has remarked, with his usual judgment,—"Paul is regarded by some as having intended to affirm that, after the resurrec-

[1] "Non est verisimile per σώματα ἐπουράνια (quæ Cl. Schoetgenii in Hor. Heb. est sententia) intelligi corpora eorum hominum qui in cœlis degunt, ut Henoch, Elias, et qui cum Christo resurrexerunt."—GERDES.

[2] Chrysostom., et alii.

tion, there shall be different degrees of glory and honour—an opinion true of itself, and which is proved by other scriptural testimonies, but which has nothing to do with Paul's present object. For he is arguing, not regarding the difference of condition among the saints after the resurrection, but regarding the difference between the bodies we now have, and those we shall hereafter receive. He removes, therefore, the charge of absurdity by this simile: the substance of the sun and moon is one, but the difference between the two, in respect of dignity and excellence, is great. What wonder, then, should our body put on a more excellent quality?" The general idea is, The body will be suited to its heavenly place and purposes.

PART VI.—THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD FARTHER UNFOLDED.

1 Corinthians xv. 42-54.—"So also is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; (for the trumpet shall sound;) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

§ 1. *The difference between the present body and the resurrection-body.*

The apostle proceeds now to a further development of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. The difference

between our present and our future bodies is more particularly specified in the remaining part of the 42d verse, and in the 43d and 44th verses:—"It is sown[1] in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." In illustrating the contrast, it is of importance to remark, that we are not to think of the body merely in the state in which it is laid in the grave, but rather of the body which is laid in the grave, as it exists generally in the present state. This is plain; for not only is the body corruptible, dishonoured, weak, before death, as well as after it,—but, as we shall by and by see, the phrase translated "a natural body" does not denote the quality of the dead body, as such, but of the living body, according to its present organisation. The contrast is, then, between the body in the present state, and the body in the resurrection state.

(1.) *The one is corruptible, the other is incorruptible.*

"It is sown in corruption,"—*i. e.*, 'that which was sown was a corruptible body.' In the present state, the human body, though the most wonderful of all God's material works, is, in consequence of sin, doomed to dissolution. "Dust it is, and unto dust it must return."[2] It has the seeds of disorganisation within it;—it carries the sentence of death in itself. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."[3] Subject to diseases in endless variety, which sooner or later end in death, the body becomes the prey of putrefaction,

[1] "After Chrysostom, Theodoret, Œcumenius, Beza, Grotius, and Heydenreich, Meyer refers all the conditions here mentioned—corruption, weakness, dishonour—to the dead corpse, which indeed is *sown*, *i. e.*, buried; but as σῶμα ψυχικὸν does not denote the quality of the *dead* body, as such, but of the living body, according to its organisation, it seems better, with Calvin, Estius, and others, to refer the preceding qualities also to the other,—so much the more as the ἀσθένεια would be an idle predicate of the former."—De Wette.

[2] Gen. iii. 19.

[3] Job xiv. 1, 2.

and is ultimately dissolved, or resolved into its elements. Thus is it "sown in corruption." But "it is raised in incorruption;"—'that which is raised is incorruptible.' Over it the curse has no power; and because there is no curse there will be no more death, and no more of the disorders that lead to death,—no more sorrow, no more crying, no more pain. Immortality will become a property of the body as well as the soul. They who shall be counted worthy to attain that world die not, but are as the angels of God. "The raised body shall not be subject to mutilation, to infirmity, to disease, to pain, to death. The eyes of Jacob shall no more be dim for age; Mephibosheth shall not be lame in his feet; nor shall the senses of Barzillai be dull and languid. Pain shall not relax or emaciate the children of the resurrection."[1] Their countenances shall never be marked by either the flush or the paleness of disease. The inhabitant of the land they are destined to inherit shall never say, "I am sick;" for the people who dwell there, forgiven their iniquity, bear no token that they have ever sinned. They are conformed to the image of their Lord, "who, being raised from the dead, dieth no more,"—"death hath no more dominion over him,"—death has no more dominion over them.

(2.) *The one is degraded, the other glorious.*

"It is sown in dishonour." The body laid in the grave is a dishonoured body. It is polluted by its connection with a depraved soul, and in many cases becomes vile through disease; and, when laid in the dust, corruptibility soon becomes corruption, and the human body, in itself so symmetrical, and beautiful, and dignified, becomes the most loathsome of all things. What more ghastly than a skeleton? What more revolting than a putrefying carcass? "It is raised in glory." That which is raised is glorious. The bodies of

[1] Boston, Balmer.

the saints shall come forth from the grave in all the beauty, and symmetry, and glory with which a portion of organised matter can be endowed. The difference between the unsightly seed and the beautiful flower, or that between the loathsome caterpillar and the beautiful winged insect into which it is transformed, or that between the embryo in the egg and the perfect state of the most beautiful of the feathered tribes, is but an imperfect figure of the difference that shall exist between the bodies of the saints laid in the grave, and those with which they shall be clothed at the period of the resurrection. On this subject we must necessarily have very inadequate ideas, and we stand in need of all the helps Scripture can furnish us with, to form anything like a distinct conception.

One method which the sacred writers employ to raise our conceptions in reference to the glory of the bodies of the risen saints, is by telling us that they are to be "fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body."[1] When he appeared to the prophets under the Old Testament dispensation in the human likeness, the splendour of his form dazzled and overpowered them. When, on the Holy Mount, he was transfigured, and gave the three chosen disciples such a manifestation as they could bear of the glory in which he shall appear when he comes in his kingdom, "the fashion of his countenance was altered," "his face shone as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." When he appeared to Saul in the way to Damascus, the radiance which encompassed him exceeded the brightness of the sun; and when John, who used to lean on his bosom, saw him in Patmos, so overwhelming was the influence of his eyes, which "were as a flame of fire," and of his countenance, which "was as the sun when he shineth in his strength," that the beloved disciple "fell at his feet as one dead."[2] How far the form in which the Saviour appeared on these occasions resembled that in which

[1] Phil. iii. 21. [2] Luke ix. 29. Acts xxvi. 13. Rev. i. 13-15.

he habitually appears to the dwellers on high, we cannot tell; but we have reason to believe that the glories of his exalted state far exceed any representation which the feeble senses of men, in the present state, are capable of apprehending. With a brightness and a beauty similar, though not equal, to his, shall the bodies of all his people be adorned at the resurrection. They "shall be like him;"—they shall bear the image of the heavenly Adam. They shall "shine as the firmament;" they shall "shine as the stars,"—nay, they shall "shine forth like the sun, in the kingdom of their Father."

(3.) *The one is weak, the other is powerful.*

"It is sown in weakness." The body which we part with at death is a weak body. When laid in the grave, the body was entirely powerless,—a piece of dead matter; and even previously, when tenanted by its mysterious living inhabitant, it was a very feeble frame. Its emblem is not the solidly built house, but the loosely put together, easily overturned, tent. The "earthly house of this tabernacle" cannot stand a rude blast. The body is easily fatigued; and it requires food, and cordials, and cessation from labour, to recruit it. But "it shall be raised in power,"—that which is raised shall be strong. It shall be fitted for a state in which there is uninterrupted exertion. In the state on which they enter at the resurrection, they "rest not day nor night:" indeed "there is no night there." Constant employment will cause no fatigue, and the repose of sleep shall be unknown, because unnecessary.

(4.) *The one is natural, the other is spiritual.*

The most remarkable part of the contrast remains yet to be considered. "It is sown a natural body,[1] it is raised a spiritual body." *Natural* is not here equivalent in meaning

[1] Wiclif's translation sounds oddly, "a beastli bodi,"—a literal version of the Vulgate.

to *material*. It is of the very essence of the body to be material. *Spiritual*, therefore, cannot be understood as the reverse of *material*, for in this sense a spiritual body is a contradiction in terms: it is no better sense than a material spirit—a spirit made of flesh and blood. Nor is there any reason to think that *spiritual* is used as equivalent to *aëriform*, in opposition to *solid*. The word translated *natural*[1] has no such signification as solid; and its true meaning must determine the meaning of *spiritual*, which is opposed to it. *Natural* must mean something that is characteristic of human bodies in the present state, and something that the word properly describes. It is not the word that is ordinarily rendered *natural*.[2] It is derived from a term which is usually rendered *soul*, or *life*.[3] Sometimes this term is used of animals, as—"Every living *soul* died in the sea."[4] When used of man, it sometimes signifies the soul of man generally—his spiritual, rational, immortal nature, with all its faculties; as—"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the *soul*: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both *soul* and body in hell."[5] When either tacitly or expressly, as in the case before us, contrasted with "the spirit," which properly signifies those higher faculties of man which connect him with the unseen and the future, the infinite and eternal,—that with which time and space have nothing to do, God and religious and moral truth and duty,—the word commonly rendered *soul* describes the lower faculties of man's nature—those which connect him with things seen and temporal—things material and present, including his senses, and his understanding generally, and his active powers as affected by the external order of things. It is thus that man is spoken of as consisting of "soul, body, and spirit." The word rendered *natural* is derived from the word *soul* in this sense, as the word rendered *spiritual* is derived from *spirit* in a corresponding sense. In this sense,

[1] ψυχικόν. [2] φυσικόν. [3] ψυχή. [4] Rev. xvi. 3. [5] Matt. x. 28.

"the *natural* man,"—the man who, as Jude says, is "*sensual*" (the same word), "having not the Spirit,"—"receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."[1] He has a soul, but he has no spirit. On the other hand, the spiritual man judges—is capable of forming a judgment, and a right one, of all things. The wisdom that is from beneath is "*sensual*,"[2]—the same word,—is occupied about things seen and temporal. The meaning of the terms is now, I trust, becoming manifest. "It is sown a natural body." What is sown is a natural or psychical—*soulical*—animal body. It is a body suited to the *animal* life,—fitted to be the instrument of the sentient principle for its purposes,—fitted for sustaining itself, and continuing the species, according to a fixed order of things,—fitted for eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and becoming acquainted with the grand and the beautiful, and the useful and profitable, and for gratifying "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,"—that is, 'what the flesh wishes for, what the eye delights in, what living men are naturally proud of,'—a body primarily fitted for performing animal functions. Such is our present body. "It is sown a natural body."

We are now in some measure prepared to explain what is meant by the second part of the antithesis, "It is raised a spiritual body." It certainly is intended to intimate that the resurrection-body is not to be, in the sense we have explained it, a *psychical*, animal, sensuous body. Not but that, in the state entered on at the resurrection, there will be exercises and delights adapted to the material, as well as to the spiritual, part of man's nature,—that the organs of the glorified body shall act on external objects, and be acted on by them, and be the means of obtaining and communicating both knowledge and enjoyment, for otherwise it

[1] Jude 19. 1 Cor. ii. 14. [2] Jam. iii. 15.

would be difficult to conceive why there should be a resurrection at all,—but many of the principal functions of the body will in that world have no place. There will be no decay; and, therefore, no such means of repair as are necessary in the present state,—no system of repletion and digestion. There will be no death; and, therefore, no provision for reproduction. "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats:" but in that state "God shall destroy both it and them." There "they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."[1] The leading idea, however, is, that the resurrection-body shall be no less fitted for, no less completely subordinated to, the gaining of the objects of man's higher nature, as not only a sentient but a spiritual being—a being endowed with a capacity of knowing, loving, fearing, serving, enjoying God,—possessed of conscience and the higher reason,—having a relish for truth and holiness,—as the present body is for animal functions, and for such a being having a relish for pleasure, and wealth, and power.[2]

Our present bodies are but in a very limited degree conducive to the improvement and gratification of these noblest capacities and tastes of man. Their adjustment to the sensuous part of our nature interferes with this. How true is the sentiment of the apocryphal writer! "The corruptible body

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 13. Matt. xxii. 30.

[2] "*σῶμα πνευματικόν.* By this paradoxical expression Paul intended, what is its literal meaning, *a body adapted to the spirit.* That is the force of adjectives in *ικός.*"—BILLROTH. "Quod totum comparatum est ad spirituales et intellectuales operationes nostræ mentis, occupatæ a Spiritu Sancto recipiendum et exsequendum, neque eo modo sustentatum quo corpora animantium viventium nunc sustentantur, neque ejus generis commotiones in animum inducens (*passiones* dicunt) quales nostra ciere solent corpora."—VITRINGA. "Spirituale dicitur corpus non quasi in spiritum vertatur: sed quia ita spiritui subditum erit, ut cœlesti habitationi conveniat, omni fragilitate et labe terrena in cœlestem stabilitatem mutata et conversa. Erit spiritui subdita caro spiritualis (corpus spirituale), sed tamen caro (corpus), non spiritus: sicut carni (corpori) subditus fuit spiritus ipse carnalis, sed tamen spiritus, non caro (corpus)."—AUGUSTIN. "Animale, *i. e.*, subjectum passionibus et necessitatibus,—spirituale, *i. e.*, omnino spiritui subjectum, nulloque indigens."—EM. SA. "Ψυχικὸν δὲ καλεῖ τὸ ὑπὸ ψυχῆς κυβερνώμενον, πνευματικὸν δὲ τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος οἰκονομούμενον."—THEODORET.

presseth down the spirit, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind, that museth on many things; and hardly can we discern the things that are upon earth, and with great labour find out the things that are before us. Who, then, can seek out the things that are in heaven?"[1] We must rest here in generalities, if we would not, "puffed up by a fleshly mind," intrude into "things not seen." The general idea is a sufficiently clear and a highly important one. The body in the resurrection-state, instead of interrupting and disturbing the operations of the mind in its highest sphere of operation—the spiritual, the region of the true, the good, the absolute, the region in which God dwells,—shall be found a suitable organ for prosecuting its congenial pursuits, and ministering to its pure and exalted delights.[2]

The apostle dwells on the fact that there is such an animal body, and such a spiritual body,—shows how these two organisations are produced, and in what order they are possessed by those who are Christ's. Some interpreters prefer the reading, 'If there be an animal body, there is also a spiritual body;' others, 'There is an animal body, and there will be a spiritual body.' But the reading and rendering adopted by our translators are undoubtedly the best: "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

The two propositions are equally true. There is an animal body, such as we all wear: there is a spiritual body, which our Lord now wears, and which all *his* shall in due time put on also. The first body we derive from our original parent, Adam; the second we shall receive from our spiritual head,

[1] Wisd. ix. 15, 16.

[2] "Such is the doctrine we are plainly taught in the New Testament respecting the constitution of our future body. Let not, then, the christian doctrine be charged with the absurdities which fanciful dreamers have suggested respecting the nature, form, size, and uses of the σῶμα πνευματικὸν, nor even with the fictions of some theologians respecting a 'corpus pellucidum, penetrans, illocale, invisibile, præfulgidum, impalpabile,' &c. &c."—KNAPP. Many of these dreams, among better things, are to be found in Bonnet's "La Palingenesie Philosophique."

Christ. "And so it is written," in the history of the creation of man, "the first man Adam was made a living soul," sentient being,—and it is equally certain "the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." [1]

The first part of this verse refers to what we read in the second chapter of the Book of Genesis, "And the Lord God formed man,"—that is, the body of the first man—"of the dust of the ground," and then "He breathed into the nostrils" of the dead organisation "the breath of life;" and he thus "became a living soul," and his body, from a mass of dead matter, became an animal or sensuous body,—a body fitted for the performance of animal functions.[2] That man from his origin had *spirit*, as well as *soul*, there can be no doubt; but still we are to remember that paradisaical life and celestial life are two very different things, and that, though man's original state was a state of perfect innocence, we have no reason to think that it was a state of very full development of the spiritual, or even the intellectual, part of his nature. It is plain that it was the sensuous part of his nature triumphing over its higher capabilities, that brought death into the world, and all our woes. From Adam we all derive the animal body,—and, in consequence of his fall, derive it in a state decidedly hostile to the development and improvement of our spiritual nature.

[1] There is a double contrast, between ψυχὴ and πνεῦμα, and ζῶσαν and ζωοποιοῦν. Camero remarks—"Qui dicit ζῶσαν denotat actum immanentem in aliquo: qui vero dicit ζωοποιοῦν non modo actum in aliquo immanentem denotat, sed etiam emanantem et promanantem, quique in alio recipitur."

[2] "It has been asserted that, by the quotation from the Old Testament, Paul appears to have Adam in his original condition in view, and not the fallen Adam, when he calls him, verse 47, χοϊκός: and an opinion has been founded on this assertion, that death is not to be considered a consequence of sin, but a natural property of the body; and that only the manner of the death, and the descent into Hades, is the consequence of sin. I have not been able to convince myself that this opinion is well grounded. It is undoubted that Adam's body likewise needed glorification; but had he not sinned, he would, without θάνατος, have proceeded on the way to be clothed upon, 2 Cor. v. 1, &c. Paul makes no direct mention of the fall,—nevertheless, what precedes, especially the φθορὰ, verse 42, as well as what follows, verses 48, 49, compels us to believe that Paul had the fallen Adam in his mind when he contrasts the χοϊκὸς and νεκρὸς."—OLSHAUSEN.

As to the origin of the spiritual body—the body fitted to our spiritual nature—the truth is this,—The second, "last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit." The supplement, *was made*, is, we apprehend, properly inserted. "The last Adam"—"the second man, the Lord from heaven"—is He who was to come, of whom Adam was a figure,[1]—He by whom comes the resurrection, as by Adam came death,—He by whom comes the spiritual body, as by Adam came the natural body. As Adam is viewed as an inanimate body, when by God breathing into his nostrils he became "a living soul," and his body an animal body,—so, I apprehend, the incarnate Son of God, our second representative, is viewed as having, in bearing our responsibilities, become dead in the flesh. He has died, is dead, is lying in the sepulchre. But, by the power of God, not only is his dead body made a spiritual body, but he himself, in that body, is made—is constituted—"a quickening spirit," a fountain of life,—the Father giving him "to hold life in himself,"[2] that he may "quicken whom he will,"—raise up "all whom the Father has given" at the last day, "having lost nothing,"—"changing their vile bodies, fashioning them like unto his own glorious body."

The order in which his people are to wear the two different kinds of body is then noticed. "Howbeit that was"—or is—"not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spititual." Some supply the word "body;" but though the ultimate reference be to the two species of body, these words are the announcement of a general principle, of which the two successive bodies are an exemplification. There is progress, there is development, in all the Divine works; "upwards all things tend."[3] There are occasional goings back, and goings wrong; but advancement is the great law. The tide advances, though there is a reflux in individual waves.

[1] ὁ τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος.—Rom. v. 14. [2] ἔχειν ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ. [3] Thomson.

We see this in the individual, and it is true also of the race. The present state altogether is but, as it were, the infancy of man. There has to be first the animal body; then the spiritual body;—just as there was first the inanimate Adam made into a living soul, and then the dead Christ made into a quickening spirit. "The first man"—*i. e.*, Adam—"is of the earth,"—formed of the earth, so far as his body was concerned; and, even so far as his animal spirit was concerned, "earthy"[1]—suited to this terrene system, fit for earth, and not for heaven. "The second man"—*i. e.*, Christ raised from the dead (the supplement *is*, we apprehend, should follow, not precede, "the Lord,"[2]) —"the second man, the Lord"—the common name given Jesus by his followers—"is from heaven." His renewed life is the result of a direct act of divine power, changing his animal body into a spiritual body, and constituting him "a quickening spirit"—a fountain of life, like his own, to all in him. "Because he lives, they shall live also." To complete the sentence, so as fully to bring out the thought, it would seem we must add "heavenly:" "the second man, the Lord, is from heaven, heavenly."[3] His material organisation—the body of his glory—is entirely fitted to the heavenly economy: and all men, being connected with the first man, wear his likeness in the animal body; and all men connected with the second man shall wear his likeness in the spiritual body: and as all who are connected with the second man are connected with the first man, they shall wear their likenesses in succession.

This is the substance of the statement made in the 48th and 49th verses,—"As is the earthy"—*i. e.*, Adam,—"so are they who are earthy,"—*i. e.*, so are all his natural descendants—they all have animal bodies. "As is the hea-

[1] עפר מן האדמה,—"Dust from the ground."—Gen. ii. 7.

[2] "Posterior homo [Dominus] cœlestis originis est."—Morus.

[3] These imperfectly-expressed antitheses are not unfrequent in the writings of Paul. In the Vulgate the antithesis in this verse is completed, and the epexegetical term, "the Lord," is omitted,—"Secundus homo de cœlo, cœlestis."

venly"—that is, the risen Lord,—"such also are"—or rather, 'shall be'—"they that are heavenly,"—*i. e.*, his spiritual offspring—they shall all have spiritual bodies; and as we, having been all the descendants of Adam, have worn his image in the animal body, so we, being the spiritual offspring of the Lord—"in him," "his,"—shall also wear his image in the spiritual body.[1]

Let the anticipation of a resurrection, and of such a resurrection, comfort those who have been called to part with dear christian friends, and consign their corruptible, dishonoured, weak, animal, dead, decomposing frames to the cold lonely mansions of darkness and corruption, and sustain our spirits, as we cannot but distinctly perceive that we are steadily moving onward towards the appointed hour when we too shall leave our bodies only the wreck of the overturned and untenantable earthly house of our tabernacle, and be indebted to others for hiding in the dust the unsightly fragments. The separation from our friends—the separation from our bodies—is but for a season: we shall meet them both again; and, though we shall feel no difficulty in recognising them, we shall meet them both wondrously changed—wondrously improved.

——— "Thrice happy meeting!
Nor time nor death shall ever part us more."[2]

Let the aged pilgrim, bending beneath the weight of years

[1] φορέσομεν. Some prefer the reading, φορέσωμεν. It would require stronger external evidence *for* this reading than exists, to counterbalance the very strong internal evidence there is *against* it. Calvin's note is very judicious:—"Some think that Paul makes a digression here for the purpose of exhorting to a pious and holy life, and, consequently, they have changed the verb of the future time into the hortative mood. In some Greek codices the reading is φορέσωμεν: but that less aptly coheres. It is to be observed that there is no exhortation here, but pure doctrine; and that he is not treating here of newness of life, but the unbroken thread of the discourse is respecting the resurrection of the flesh." Theodoret well says, "Τὸ φορέσομεν προρρητικῶς, οὐ παραινετικῶς, εἴρηκε." Should φορέσωμεν be proved the preferable reading by overwhelming external evidence, still the meaning may be, not "Let us bear," but "We ought to bear"—'It is fit that we should bear.' Very good scholars give this force to the aorist subjunctive, as equivalent to δεῖ ἡμᾶς φορέσαι.

[2] Blair.

and sorrows, cheer himself with the thought that he bears within him the germ of a frame of immortal youth and untiring vigour—which, though to be laid beneath the clod, has undying vitality in it; and rejoice that ere long the aching head and the throbbing heart shall rest in a bed of profound repose, assuredly to awake, at the appointed season, to become the seats of intenser thought and deeper feeling, ministering thenceforward only ever-growing enlightenment and delight throughout eternity.

The christian doctrine of the resurrection of our bodies is well fitted to teach us how we should use these "vessels," as the apostle calls them, "in sanctification and honour." Is it meet that these bodies, which are to become spiritual bodies, should be treated as if they were nothing but animal bodies? Should we, who call ourselves Christians, not remember that we have spirit as well as soul, and show that we are sanctified wholly in soul and spirit, by being sanctified wholly in body? "Whether we eat or drink, let us do all to the glory of God." Let us glorify God, not only in our spirits, but in our bodies, for they are His,—bought with a price, the price of the blood of his Son,—and to be transformed by the power of his Son. Our bodies are the members of Christ, and must not be desecrated; our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and must not be polluted by idols. Even in the present state the body may be rendered subservient to the spirit; and the more this can be done, the Christian will find it the better for him, both now and at the resurrection. "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those who are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

It is a serious reflection to all—We are not done with our bodies at death; we must meet with them again; and, according as we use them now, will they be to us, through

all eternity, the instruments for higher enjoyment, or for deeper suffering, than they ever have been in this world. "For"—in our bodies—"we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."[1] "Little do the drunkard and the sensualist consider that, when revelling in their gross and debasing pleasures, they are inflicting on themselves wounds, and inducing distempers which shall rankle and fester to all eternity; that, while feeding their unhallowed lusts, they are providing nourishment for the worm that dieth not, and fuel for the fire that shall never be quenched."[2]

Happy, inconceivably happy, they who are then found in Christ—"clothed upon with their house from heaven,"—with "bodies fashioned like unto their Lord's glorious body,"—bearing no longer the image of him of the earth, in the animal body, but of the Lord from heaven, in the spiritual body—in body and spirit fit for heaven! They shall be received into heaven—the heaven of heavens; "and so shall they ever be with the Lord."

§ 2. *The ground of the difference between the present body and the resurrection-body.*

The 50th verse,—"Now *this* I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—has obviously a close connection both with what precedes and with what follows it. It is a *hinge* of the discourse. But it is of importance to ascertain whether its principal connection be with what goes before, or with what comes after. The resolution of that question depends on whether the word "*this*"[3] refers to what the apostle had said—viz., that, "as we have borne

[1] 2 Cor. v. 10. [2] Bahmer [3] τοῦτο.

the image of the earthly" representative-man, so we must "bear the image of the heavenly" representative-man,—or to what the apostle was just about to say,—viz., "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit[1] incorruption,"—and the resolution of that question again depends on whether the word rendered "*that*"[2] should be rendered "that"[3] or "because,"[4]—whether it is intended to mark the words that follow, as what the apostle refers to when he says, "Now this I say;" or whether it is intended to intimate that the words which follow are the reason of the assertion made in the previous verse—"we must bear the image of the heavenly" Adam.

Our translators obviously took the first view. They consider the apostle as saying, 'Now, I wish to impress on you this principle with regard to the resurrection-body—as to what body the raised are to come in,—"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption,"—a principle which holds so extensively, that (what has never been revealed till now) the bodies of saints that are found alive at the resurrection must undergo a change—in its effects equivalent to death and resurrection—in order to their inheriting the kingdom of God.'

This gives a very good meaning; but I cannot help thinking that it gives greater closeness to the train of thought—which is indeed remarkably compact throughout the whole chapter—to consider *this* as referring to the statement just made; to render the particle translated '*that*,' as it is often rendered, 'because,' and to consider the words that follow as assigning the reason of what had just been said. "Now"—or 'And,' or 'But'—"this I say,"—'which I have just said to you,' viz., that we must "bear the image of the heavenly" Adam,—"because flesh and blood cannot inherit

[1] "κληρονομεῖ does not stand for the future, but denotes the nature of the case; comp. verse 35."—De Wette.

[2] ὅτι. [3] *Quod.* [4] *Quia.*

the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

For the satisfactory exposition of these words, we must be able to give answers to the following questions: What is meant by "inheriting the kingdom of God"? What is meant by "flesh and blood"? What is meant by "inheriting incorruption"? What is meant by "corruption"? How is it that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"? How is it that "corruption does not inherit incorruption"? and, finally, How is this a reason for the apostle's assertion, that, "as we have borne the image of the earthly, we must also bear the image of the heavenly"? If we can rightly answer these questions, we shall understand the passage; not otherwise.

There can be no doubt that, to "inherit the kingdom of God," is to enjoy the dignified delights of that state of final happiness, destined for the people of God, which is to succeed the resurrection. The expression, "kingdom of God," is used in Scripture, in reference to that state, in two different ways. "The kingdom of God," or of heaven, is very often used as a general name for that order of things to be established by Messiah, of which the leading feature is the making of its subjects holy and happy in an entire subjection of mind and will to God. The term is employed in reference to this order of things, in its commencement, its progress, and its consummation,—the first two, called by divines 'the kingdom of grace,' having their scene on earth; the last, 'the kingdom of glory,' having its scene in heaven. In employing the expression, sometimes the subjects, sometimes the laws, sometimes the immunities, sometimes the events and destinies, of this order of things, are the prominent idea. In this view of the matter, the heavenly state is the complete development of this order of things—the kingdom of God fully established. God is, and is acknowledged as, absolutely sovereign—all in all; and holy angels and just men made perfect are his holy, happy subjects. But the

figure is employed in a somewhat different way also, to describe the heavenly blessedness. It is represented as a kingdom of which the saints are to be possessors. They are to be kings there. "I appoint unto you a kingdom," says our Lord, "as my Father hath appointed to me" a kingdom. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." And, when he comes as the universal Judge, he will say to "his sheep"—those on his right hand,—"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." It is said that they who "receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ;" and he who loves them, and washes them from their sins in his own blood, is said to "make them kings," as well as "priests, to God, even his Father."[1] It is in this way that the figure is employed, when, as in the case before us, the saints are represented as *inheriting* the kingdom. The kingdom they inherit is "the kingdom of God"—a divine kingdom—a kingdom prepared for them by God, bestowed on them by God. To "inherit the kingdom" is just to "reign in life." The expression "kingdom," indicates the exalted nature of their heavenly enjoyments; and "inheriting the kingdom," the gratuitous manner in which they obtain them, and the secure tenure by which they hold them. To "inherit the kingdom of God," then, is to enjoy the celestial blessedness.

The second question to be attended to is, What is meant by "flesh and blood"? "Flesh and blood" are leading constituents of the body of man, as of all animals; and the expression, when it occurs in Scripture, seems always to signify human nature in its present embodied state, or mankind—"the generation of flesh and blood," as the son of Sirach calls them.[2] Thus, our Lord says to Peter, "Flesh

[1] Luke xxii. 29. Rev. iii. 21. Matt. xxv. 34. Rom. v. 17.
[2] Ecclus. xiv. 18.

and blood hath not revealed it" (his Messiahship) "unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven,"—'not man, but God, has taught thee this.' "Forasmuch then," says the apostle to the Hebrews, "as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same,"—'Inasmuch as those he came to save were embodied human spirits, he also became incarnate.' "We wrestle not," says he to the Ephesians—*i. e.*, not only, not chiefly, —"against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."[1] 'We have a struggle to maintain, not only with *men*—perhaps with human nature, both in ourselves and others,—but with evil unembodied spirits.' Some have supposed that "flesh and blood" signifies "depraved human nature;"[2] but though the expression "the flesh," as opposed to "the spirit," often occurs with this meaning in Scripture,—*e. g.*, in such expressions as, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God," "they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh,"[3] "the minding of the flesh" is enmity against God, —the phrase "flesh and blood" is never employed in this way; and, indeed, such a declaration, as that *depraved* human nature *cannot*, in any sense of that word, "inherit the kingdom of God"—enjoy the holy happiness of heaven, —though undoubtedly true, has no bearing on the question the apostle is discussing, "With what bodies do the raised come?" "Flesh and blood," then, does not signify "flesh and blood" universally; nor does it signify the human body, taken by itself, for that can *inherit*, can enjoy, nothing; but it signifies man, with such a body as he now possesses, formed of flesh and blood—an animal body. 'Man, in his present state, in reference to his *body*, is unfit for heaven.'

[1] Matt. xvi. 17. Heb. ii. 14. Eph. vi. 12.

[2] Chrysostom. Tertullian. Theodoret and Theophylact, who usually just echo Chrysostom, here judiciously differ from him. Theodoret's note is, "σάρκα καὶ αἷμα τὴν θνητὴν φύσιν καλεῖ."

[3] Rom. viii. 8, 5.

The third question, What is meant by "inheriting incorruption"? need not detain us long. No doubt substantially it is the same thing as "inheriting the kingdom of God"—enjoying the celestial blessedness; but it presents the celestial enjoyments under a peculiar aspect. They are incorruptible; they are immortal—incapable of decay, both from within and without; secure from all hazard of coming to an end; "the inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven."[1]

The fourth question, What is meant by "corruption"? is equally easily answered. "Corruption" here means that which is corruptible and destined to destruction; and plainly refers to the body of man in the present state, which "is sown in corruption."

As to how "flesh and blood *cannot* inherit the kingdom of God," those who hold, as we think mistakingly, the notion, that the phrase "flesh and blood" means depraved human nature, consider the words as intimating that there exists a moral impossibility in the case: depraved man is incapable of holy enjoyment; heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people; and the Divine decree bars the door of heaven against all the unholy. "The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God;" "nothing that defileth" —nothing that is defiled—can enter there. These are most important truths, but clearly not the truths taught here. The apostle teaches us the *physical* impossibility of men, with such bodies as we have now—formed of flesh and blood —performing the functions, and enjoying the delights, of the celestial state. As the unborn infant in the womb is utterly unfit for performing the functions of a man,—as the embryo lark in the shell cannot mount into the heavens, or pour forth mellifluous notes,—as the caterpillar or the chrysalis cannot sail on coloured wings through the air, nor feed on the nectar of the flowers,—so man, with his body of flesh

[1] 1 Pet. i. 4.

and blood, cannot participate in the exalted delights of the heavenly state. In the nature of things it is impossible. It might be so, if—to accommodate a passage, which refers to another subject—the "kingdom of heaven were meat and drink;" but the "kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."[1] *How* it is impossible, we can only imperfectly apprehend. We can easily see that a great change in the sphere, in which an animated body is to act, may necessitate a great change in its organisation. If fishes are to live on the dry land,—if the tribes which live on the earth are henceforth to live in the sea,—if those which now fly are henceforward to creep, and those which creep to fly,—must not important changes take place in their bodily frame? and have we reason to think that the change necessary to fit man, raised from the dead, for his new sphere of action and enjoyment, shall be less than that which would be required in the cases just now supposed?

There may be—there probably are—capacities of various kinds, both of knowledge and enjoyment, latent in our natures, which our present bodily organisation prevents being developed, much in the same way as the want of the eye would prevent our minds, to which perception, in all its various modes, properly belongs, from obtaining the knowledge and enjoyment derived from sight. To know and enjoy all of which our minds, improved as they will be when united to the raised body, shall be capable, through means of a material organisation, may well require a body very differently constructed from our present body.

It seems quite plain, from numerous facts stated in Scripture, that the present animal sensuous frame, not only, in various ways, presents obstacles to progress in the highest order of attainments and enjoyments of which man's nature is in itself capable, even here below; but that it is incapable,

[1] Rom. xiv. 17.

without some great change, of sustaining the light and glory, the revelations and enjoyments, of the celestial state. The sum of the attainments and joys of that state is to *see* God. Now, these are striking words of Jehovah to Moses, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live."[1] And, when He vouchsafed his servant a revelation of himself, he put him in a cleft of the rock, and covered him with his hand, while the glory, which would otherwise have overwhelmed him, passed by. Remarkable manifestations of the Divine glory seem to have produced powerful and painful impressions on the bodily frames of those to whom they were made. Daniel, after one of his visions, fainted, and was sick certain days; and, on another occasion, that man, greatly beloved, "stood trembling;" and when "one like the similitude of the sons of men" addressed him,—he "set his face toward the ground, and became dumb," and, when He enabled him to speak, it was to say, "O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength: for how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me." "When I heard," says Habakkuk, "my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble." When the disciples witnessed the glorious appearances, and heard the unearthly words, while they were with their Lord on the holy mount, they "fell on their faces, and were sore afraid, and became heavy with sleep; and spoke, not knowing what they said." And—to notice no more instances—when Jesus appeared, in the glories of the upper world, to the disciple whom he loved, and who often had leaned on his bosom, "he fell at his feet as one dead."[2] All these exemplifications of the influence of "things unseen and eternal" on the animal body, make it

[1] Exod. xxxiii. 20.
[2] Dan. x. 4-10. Hab. iii. 16. Luke ix. 32, 33. Rev. i. 17.

plain that, in its present state, "it could not sustain the exceeding great and eternal weight of glory" which is to be laid on the perfected saints of God. Indeed, the exhaustion produced by intense study and high excitement shows, with sufficient plainness, the necessity—the physical necessity—of such a change as is indicated in the passage before us.

How "corruption" does not "inherit incorruption,"—that is, how what is corruptible or corrupted cannot enjoy what is undecaying and immortal,—is self-evident. That must be immortal which can enjoy immortal blessedness.

The force of the statement which we have been illustrating, as a reason for the statement made by the apostle in the previous verse, must now be clearly discerned. "We must bear the image of the heavenly" Adam in the spiritual body, otherwise we cannot enjoy the honours and felicities of the heavenly state; "*for* flesh and blood *cannot* inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

This passage, as we have interpreted it, may seem to some not very consistent with some other statements contained in Scripture. Job says, that "in his flesh he shall see God;" but if this passage refer to the resurrection, which I am disposed to think it does, it only means that in his body—not unchanged, but transformed—he should see God. We find our Lord, after his resurrection, saying to his disciples, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and blood, as ye see me to have:" but it does not appear that our Lord's natural body was transformed into a spiritual body till he was taken up—probably in the being taken up—to heaven. Had he not retained the fleshly body while he remained on earth, the proof of his resurrection could not have been so complete and satisfactory. He appears, indeed, in the apocalyptic vision, "a Lamb as it had been slain;"[1] but the vision is obviously symbolical, and intimates

[1] Job xix. 26. Luke xxiv. 39. Rev. v. 6.

no more than that our Lord is recognised in heaven as having shed his blood as a victim for the sins of men. In the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, a vast multitude of dead bones, lying in a confused heap in the open valley, are represented as coming together, "bone to his bone: and the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above:" "and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." But this is not an account of a literal resurrection of men, but of a spiritual revival of the Israelitish church and nation. "These bones," says Jehovah, "are the whole house of Israel." "O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel."

This physical impossibility of a human soul, wearing an animal body, formed of *such* flesh and blood as our bodies are—and so a corruptible body,—enjoying the undecaying, immortal glories and honours of the celestial kingdom, is represented by the apostle as rendering it necessary—in the case of those who, being found alive on the earth on our Lord's second coming, are not to die and be buried,—that they should pass through a change, which, though instantaneous, shall in its effects be equivalent to that produced in the great body of the saved by death and resurrection. "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,[1] in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, (for the trumpet shall sound;) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

The apostle terms this statement respecting the change which the living are to undergo at the last day, "a mystery,"[2]

[1] "Aliud demutatio, aliud perditio. Perdit hæc, illa mutat. Quemodo ergo, quod perditum est, mutatum non est, ita quod mutatum est, perditum non est." —TERTULLIAN.

[2] "μυστήριον rem hactenus vobis aliisque incognitam.—Rom. xi. 25, xvi. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 7, iv. 1, xiii. 2, xiv. 2."—GROTIUS. *Vide* Campbell's Preliminary

—*i. e.*, 'something that had hitherto been kept secret—something which man could not have discovered, and something which God had not hitherto revealed.'

"We shall not all sleep." "We,"[1] here, includes the apostle and all who are in Christ—all who are his, in all countries and ages,—"we shall not all sleep,"—*i. e.*, 'we shall not all die, and for a period, shorter or longer, continue in the state of the dead.' There will be found, when the Lord descends from heaven to raise the dead, a generation of believing men, more or less numerous. These "shall not sleep"—they shall not die and be buried; but they "shall be changed,"—they shall be so changed, as that their bodies shall not be such flesh and blood as they had been.[2]

This change will take place simultaneously with the resurrection of the dead. We know that "they who are alive and remain" are not to prevent—not to get before—not to have any advantage over—those who have slept. "The dead in Christ shall first arise,"—*i. e.*, 'before they who are alive leave the earth to meet the Lord in the air.' But the resurrection and the change shall be simultaneous and instantaneous. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, (for the trumpet shall sound;)"[3]—both shall the dead be raised incorruptible, and "we" who remain "shall be changed" from corruptible into incorruptible.

What is meant by the last trumpet sounding we cannot tell.[4]

Dissertations,—Diss. ix., Part i. "Φρικτὸν καὶ ἀπόῤῥητον ὃ μὴ πάντες ἴσασι."—CHRYSOSTOM. Olshausen seems to think that it is not the *fact*, but the manner of it, that forms the mystery; but in that case the mystery is undeclared to this hour.

[1] "Illorum, quos hic viventes inventurus est Christus, personam in se atque illos qui tum secum vivebant transfigurat apostolus."—AUGUSTIN. "Qualis vel κοίνωσις vel κοινοποιΐα ad rem vividius describendam simulque brevissime exprimendam sacris æque ac profanis scriptoribus est familiaris."—GERDES.

[2] Billroth has correctly remarked, that "the emphasis belongs to ἀλλαγησόμεθα, and the οὐ κοιμηθησόμεθα is only an accessory idea,—'All, it is true, will not die, but all will certainly be changed.'" This change is expressed by the word μετασχηματίζειν, Phil. iii. 21.

[3] "Verba σαλπίσει γὰρ vel parentheseos signo includi, vel absque parenthesi cum sequentibus = καὶ οἱ νεκροὶ κ. τ. λ. copulari possunt."—HEYDENREICH.

[4] How strikingly does the majestic, simple generality of such a description contrast with the absurdly minute specifications of the Jewish rabbins! "Quo-

We know that solemn sounds, like as of an unearthly trumpet, mingled with the thunders of Sinai at the giving of the law;[1] and it would seem that the closing scene of the present order of things is to be introduced by similar awful tokens of a present Divinity. "As all signals in war were usually given by means of the trumpet, the term is chosen to designate the mighty working which will penetrate the universe; and will be connected with Christ's appearance, and by which both the assembling of the faithful then living, and the awakening of the dead, will be produced. External physical phenomena—earthquakes, storms, and the like—will, no doubt, accompany this waking; but it is principally to be conceived as of a spiritual nature."[2]

When that signal is given, instantaneously shall the graves become empty. Earth and sea shall give up their dead; the risen saints come forth *transformed;* and they who are alive, without putting off "the earthly house of this tabernacle," receive the "house not made with hands:" without being unclothed, be clothed upon; without their life for a season giving way to mortality, have "mortality at once swallowed up in life." Thus shall both they who sleep be raised, and they that wake be changed.

And this change in both is necessary for their enjoying the blessedness and glory of the kingdom prepared for them. "For this corruptible must[3] put on incorruption,

modo Deus S. B. mortuos in seculo futuro resuscitat? Docemur, Deum magnam tubam, mille ulnas, juxta ulnam Dei, longam, in manum sumpturum, eamque inflaturum esse, ejusque sonum ab una extremitate mundi ad alteram auditum iri. Primo sono, totus mundus commovebitur. Secundo, pulvis separabitur. Tertio, ossa colligentur. Quarto, membra incalescent. Quinto, capita tegentur cute. Sexto, animi et animæ in corpora reducentur. Septimo, revivescent et stabunt vestiti."—R. Akiba, cit. Eisenmengero, ap. Wetstein. Macknight strangely represents this trumpet as sounded after the resurrection of the dead saints. Dr Lawson, with characteristic quiet humour, remarks, "This is an improvement on the mystery which the apostle shows us."—MS. Notes.

[1] Exod. xix. 16.

[2] Olshausen.

[3] The force of δεῖ is well given by Cocceius:—"*Neque* enim opus Dei potest consistere in imperfecto: *neque* quæsitio Dei in desiderio: *neque* Dei bonitas in ostentatione: *neque* promissio abire in frustrationem: *neque* expectatio in pudorem: *neque* molitiones Dei non redire ad gloriam Dei: *neque* creatura

and this mortal must put on[1] immortality." It is becoming, congruous, and necessary that it should be so: the corruptible cannot inherit the incorruptible; the mortal cannot possess the immortal. And, when this change has been accomplished, "then is the end," both of death and of the resurrection.

The full harvest has then been gathered in. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; then[2] shall be brought to pass the saying[3] that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."[4] The oracle referred to is to be found in the 8th verse of the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. The words, as they stand in our version, are, "He"—that is, the Lord God of hosts—"shall swallow up death in victory." The apostle gives it as it is found in one of the ancient Greek translations[5]—"Death is swallowed up in victory."[6] The words, "in victory," seem equivalent to, 'victoriously, resistlessly, completely, for ever.' The meaning of the phrase may be judged of from the way it is employed in the following passages: "Shall the sword devour *for ever?*" "Wherefore dost thou forget us *for ever*, and forsake us for so long time?" "The smoke thereof shall go up *for ever.*"[7] The quotation occurs in one of those predictions of the prophet, in which, as he so often does, he gives, as it were, a bird's-eye

manere subjecta vanitati, cui invita subjicitur . *neque* regnum Dei semper esse in lucta et habere potentiam contrariam aut indigere potentia auxiliatrice."

[1] "ἐνδύσασθαι, *put on*,—the image of close union. Isa. lix. 17; Luke xxiv. 49; Rom. xiii. 14; Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10; especially 2 Cor. v. 3."—De Wette.

[2] "τότε. Tunc, non prius. Certa est Scriptura: ergo certa est resurrectio."—Bengel. Τότε here refers to the same period as εἶτα, verse 24; κ. ὁ. θ. ε ν. here is equivalent to ε. ε. κ. ὁ. θ., verse 26.

[3] "Λόγος is here used as equivalent to προφητεία."—Olshausen.

[4] "Νῖκος is a more recent form for νίκη."—Olshausen.

[5] Theodotion. Theophylact supposes that Hos. xiii. 15 is here, as well as in the sequel, referred to.

[6] An ingenious friend has suggested that "the destroying," literally, "the swallowing up," of the covering cast on all people,—the "veil spread over all nations" and "the swallowing up of death in victory,"—are parallel expressions. The figure in this case is very beautiful, and a clear sense is given to a statement very obscure, as commonly understood.

[7] 2 Sam. ii. 26. Lam. v. 20. Isa. xxxiv. 10.

view of the New Testament economy, from its commencement to its termination. The oracle has a direct and sole reference to the great event to which the apostle here applies it. Death is abolished for ever. There is henceforth no more death in the universe of God.

We have the same sublime scene brought before us, in a somewhat different aspect, by John the divine: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."[1]

Then shall the raised and the changed saints,—they who have slept, and they who wake—they who were absent from the body, and they who were present with it,—find themselves "accepted of the Lord," at his glorious appearance, which was their blessed hope; and, "together made perfect," they shall together be caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and "so shall they ever be with the Lord"—the living Lord,—themselves no more the dying and the dead in the land of the dead and dying, but the living in the land of the living. "The last enemy is destroyed."

What an impressive scene does the passage of Scripture we have been reviewing bring before the mind! The Son of man—who is the Son of God,—perfected through his sufferings, sits on the throne of universal dominion, and controls and regulates all the movements of created things, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, so as to pro-

[1] Rev. xx. 11-14.

mote the great object of his reign—the glory of his Father in the salvation of his people. He has sat there for ages, and "he must reign, till all his enemies are made his footstool." And now the great end is gained: "the kingdom is brought back to the Father;" "all" opposing "rule, and authority, and power are put down;" monarchies and kingdoms are broken up, thrones overturned, and crowns and sceptres lying as neglected things. The world itself is about to be dissolved—heaven and earth to pass away. The "great white throne" appears in the heavens. How majestic the solemn state of the conclusion of the "mystery of God!" The sun shining in his strength is but a feeble figure of the glories of the countenance of the Judge. How splendid the pomp of his magnificent retinue![1] Thousands of glorious celestial creatures minister to him; "ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him." How loud, how deep, how piercing, are the sounds sent forth by the archangel's trumpet! How does life, at his bidding, find its way to the deepest, securest holds of death; and how do countless forms, beaming with beauty, come forth from the abodes of corruption and desolation! "In the twinkling of an eye" the dead are raised, and the living are changed. The triumphs of death are over for ever; and the whole ransomed family of man—a number without number—stand on high at the right hand of their redeeming Lord and King. The judgment is set; the books opened; the sentences pronounced; and, while the wicked, with their chosen leader, "go away into everlasting punishment," the righteous, with their Lord, rise to the heaven of heavens, and enter "into life eternal." And all this is not the baseless vision of a distempered fancy. "These are the true and faithful sayings of God." How strange is it that we, professing to believe all this, should yet be so little affected with it,—so deeply interested in a world, the fashion of which is passing

[1] Howe.

away,—and so careless in preparing for a scene in which our everlasting destiny is involved, and which, according as it is met, prepared or unprepared for, will open to us the gates of heaven, or seal on us the never-to-be-opened covering of the abyss of perdition! "Oh, that we were wise, that we understood this, that we would consider our latter end!"

I close these illustrations with the remarks of one of the most shrewd observers, sober thinkers, and perspicuous and forcible writers, of our times—the present Archbishop of Dublin. "This portion of Scripture affords an argument for the truth of our religion, that is perfectly within the reach of plain unlearned Christians,—of such persons as, some pretend, cannot be expected to give 'a reason for the hope that is in them,' but must be content to believe just as they are told. Now, let such a one, if he chance to meet with an unbeliever who treats Christianity as a series of 'cunningly devised fables,' merely put before him this portion of Scripture, and ask him how it happens that neither Paul, nor any other of the sacred writers, has given us a full, detailed, and captivating description of everything that is to take place at the end of the world,—of all the interesting particulars of the glorified bodies with which the faithful will rise, and of the heavenly joys to which they will be admitted? Nothing, certainly, could have been more likely to gratify the curiosity of believers, and even to attract fresh converts, than a lively and magnificent description of heavenly glories. Had Paul been an impostor, it would not have been at all difficult for him to invent such a description; and, had he been an enthusiast, he could not have avoided it. One, whose imagination had got the better of his judgment, and whose wild fancies were regarded by himself as revelations, could never have treated of such a subject as this without being tempted, by its mysterious and deep interest, to invent, and actually to believe, a vast number of particulars respecting the other world.

"Why, then, you may ask, do we find nothing of this

nature in the writings of the apostles (the Koran is full of it)? The plain answer is, they were not either impostors or enthusiasts, but plain, simple, honest men, who taught only what had been revealed to them, and what they had been commissioned to reveal to others. You may safely defy an unbeliever to give any other answer to the question if he can. For eighteen hundred years has this proof remained uncontradicted; and, in all that time, no one has given, or ever attempted to give, any explanation of the brief, unadorned, unpretending accounts which the New Testament writers give of matters so interesting to man's curiosity, except by considering them as upright, sober-minded men, setting forth what they knew to be truth, just as they had received it. And, it should be observed that, if we were totally unable to perceive the wisdom, or to guess the cause, of the sacred writers giving us such scanty accounts of the life to come, still, the proof which the scantiness affords of the truth of what they say remains the same. For, if they wrote as no impostor and no enthusiast ever would write, they could have been neither. What cannot have come from man must have come from God."[1]

PART VII.—CONCLUSION.

1 Corinthians xv. 55-58.—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

In our illustrations of the apostle's dissertation on the resurrection of life, we are now arrived at its concluding section, consisting of a triumphant thanksgiving and a solemn exhortation. The triumphant thanksgiving is contained in these words:—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave,

[1] View of the Scripture Revelations concerning a Future State, pp. 127-131

where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." The solemn exhortation is contained in these words:—"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." We will endeavour to illustrate the thanksgiving and the exhortation in their order.

§ 1. *The Thanksgiving.*

And, first, of the thanksgiving. By many interpreters the thanksgiving is considered as confined to the 57th verse. They consider the words in the 55th verse as a quotation from the prophet Hosea, and as a part of "the saying that is written," which the apostle represents as "brought to pass" in the resurrection, and the 56th verse as an explicatory note on this saying. We cannot take this view of the subject, for two reasons:—First, There is no ground for considering the words in the 55th verse as quoted from Hosea. The passage supposed to be referred to is chap. xiii. 14, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." This is a literal rendering of the Hebrew text. The passage, as given in the Greek translation, runs thus:—"From the hand of Hades," the separate state, "I will deliver, and from death I will redeem them. Where is thy vengeance, O death? where thy dart, O Hades? Entreaty is hid from my eyes." These words, especially as they stand in the Greek version, may have suggested the form of expression to the apostle, but certainly they are not quoted.[1] The passage in Hosea obviously refers to the de-

[1] "Probabile est non hic ex professo apostolum voluisse prophetam citare testem, sed tantum sententiam communi usu receptam ad suum institutum

liverance of the Israelites from external calamities. Our second reason for holding that the words are no part of the oracle referred to, is, that the apostle does not say, "the sayings that are written," but "the saying that is written;" and that saying is the passage from the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

By some interpreters, who take the same general view of the passage as we do, the words are considered as the words of the saints raised and changed in the day of the Lord. They no doubt do express what will be their universal feeling; but it appears much more natural, with the more ancient interpreters,[1] to consider them as expressive of the apostle's own sentiment, when under the influence of that faith which gives a present existence to future events,—he as it were saw the glorious consummation which he had been describing.[2] In this point of view I proceed to explain them.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The passage is a difficult one, from various causes. In these words, death, and the grave—or rather *hades*, the separate state (for the Greek word[3] here never signifies the grave, nor does the Hebrew word in Hosea[4] ever signify hell)—are personified. Death is represented as having a "sting." The word rendered "sting"[5] properly signifies anything sharp-pointed. It may describe the sting of a venomous animal, as a serpent or scorpion,—or a dart, a javelin, or a sharp-pointed sword. Death, then, may be considered as emblematised either by some monstrous venomous animal, with a sharp and strong sting, of which it has been deprived,—or as a cruel herdsman, driving a help-

obiter accommodasse."—CALVIN. "It is a great folly to charge the apostle with misquoting and perverting, where it doth not plainly appear that he so much as quotes at all."—KIDDER.

[1] Theodoret, Theophylact, Œcumenius.

[2] "Verses 55-57 are, as it were, a lyrical conclusion to the whole section, like Rom. viii. 31, &c."—DE WETTE.

[3] ᾅδης. [4] שְׁאוֹל. [5] κέντρον.

less flock of sheep before him with a sharp-pointed goad, which has been taken from him,—or as a warrior, armed with a javelin or dart, which has been wrested from his grasp. The last is likely the image which was in the apostle's mind, as appears from the address that follows,—"O grave"—O Hades—"where is thy victory?" Hades is personified as a monarch who has made extensive conquests, and who seemed secure of retaining them, but who is suddenly and completely deprived of them. In the complex figure, Death, the warrior, is subordinate to Hades, the king. It is Death's victories which people Hades' dominions; but the captives are all set free, and he who enslaved them has become powerless, being deprived of his arms.

It is right to state, however. that in the opinion of those who are well qualified to form a judgment on such a subject,[1] the true reading of the passage is not—"O death, where is thy dart? O Hades, where is thy victory?" but—"O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy dart?" In this case there is but one personification.[2] Death is viewed as a warrior-monarch, who, by his resistless arms, has peopled his dominions, the grave, with innumerable captives, who seemed doomed to hopeless slavery. During a long campaign he has been uniformly victorious; but in the resurrection the apostle sees all his successes reversed at once, the "captivity led captive," the wide-spread dominions of this king of terrors left entirely untenanted, while he, as a

[1] Matthæi, Lachmann, Tischendorf. Olshausen admits that the critical authorities are strongly in favour of this reading. If admitted, it settles in the negative the question as to the words being a quotation; for the Hebrew text has in the last clause שְׁאוֹל, and the LXX. has ᾅδη.

[2] Milton, as Macknight remarks, has made good use of the apostle's personification:—

> ——————"The other shape,
> If shape it might be called, which shape had none,
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
> Or substance might be call'd, which shadow seem'd,
> For each seem'd either; black it stood as night,
> Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
> And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head
> The likeness of a kingly crown had on."—*Paradise Lost*, ii. 666.

warrior, is deprived completely and for ever of the means of replenishing them: the monarch is spoiled of his conquest, and the warrior of his arms. In plain words, 'All that have died now live, and of the living none shall henceforth evermore die.' The apostle exults over the fallen enemy of man. 'How art thou fallen, who hast made so many fall! Is this he who made earth a wilderness, and opened not the house of his prisoners? O thou enemy, thy destructions are come to a perpetual end. The spoiler is spoiled: the destroyer is destroyed. There shall be no more death!'

In the words that follow, the apostle unfolds the mystery both of death's obtaining and losing his power over man. How came this warrior-king to wield a weapon so resistless, to obtain a conquest so complete? "The dart of death is sin; and the strength of sin," as the dart of death, "is the law." It was thus that death obtained and held the dominion over men. And how has this power been taken from him? "God has given us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ," who has "taken away"—"made an end of—sin," and "magnified the law, and made it honourable." Let us look at these statements in their order.

"The dart of death is sin." It has been common to say that sin, or guilt, is the sting of death, inasmuch as such a change as death to an innocent person would be comparatively a harmless thing.[1] It is as indicating the displeasure of God, and introducing us into a state where that displeasure will be more adequately displayed, that death is really dreadful and destructive: it is sin that gives death its bitterness, and the law that gives sin its power. This is important truth,—O that our hearts were more deeply penetrated, our lives more habitually influenced, by it!—but it is not the truth stated here. The question is, How came death to

[1] "Non habemus quod in morte metuamus, si nihil quod timendum sit vita nostra commisit. Est quidem mors separatio animæ et corporis. Anima absolvitur, corpus resolvitur. Quæ absolvitur gaudet, quod resolvitur in terram nihil sentit, nihil agnoscit."—AMBROS.

be possessed of the power he exercises over all mankind, and of which he is to be for ever bereft at the resurrection? How came he by that javelin which he launches with such unerring aim, and such deadly power? It all originated in the first sin of the first man. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." In Adam all sinned; and, therefore, "in Adam all died." It is thus that "death reigns from Adam to Moses," from Moses to Christ, from Christ to the resurrection-day. All the death in our world is the consequence of sin—the sin of the first man. That sin is death's dart. Had it not been for that sin, no man would have needed to die.[1]

But what has given such fearful power to this dart, as that the whole race falls before it? "The strength of sin," as the dart of death, "is the law."[2] The law, viewed generally as the sanctioned declaration of the Divine will, though in itself most "holy, just, and good," is, in more points of view than one, "the strength of sin." If sin be powerful to condemn, it is because of the curse of the law; and if it be powerful to harass and deprave, it is because the requisitions and sanctions of the law irritate and rouse into more energetic activity the evil propensities of our fallen nature, while the righteous curse of the law, so long as we continue under it, shuts us out from divine holy influence, and delivers us, bound hand and foot, to our great spiritual enemy. These, too, are most important truths. But what the apostle here refers to is the influence which the law of God, broken by Adam, has, in giving power to his sin as the dart of death. It is the law that said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;" and that proclaimed, when it was violated, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;"[3] it is this law that has made "sin

[1] Rom. v. 12-14.

[2] The illustrative parallel is not that often quoted as such, Rom. vii. 11, but Rom. v. 13. Leigh says that the law is the power of sin "respectu (1) revelationis, (2) condemnationis, (3) irritationis." Quite right, but it is to the second of these that the apostle here refers.

[3] Gen. ii. 17; iii. 19.

reign unto death" over all the generations of men. It was a powerful word which came forth from the Lord Most High. The declaration of the apostle with regard to that word which produced the untimely death of the rebellious Israelites, strewing the desert with their carcasses, and securing that not one, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, of that generation should enter Canaan, is still more strikingly applicable to the law prohibiting and denouncing man's first sin. It was no dead letter: it was "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,"[1] turning all the generations of men to destruction, and carrying them away as by a flood. With such a proof of the faithfulness and the power of the law's denunciations in the universal death of our race, as the token of the Divine displeasure for the sin of our progenitor, constantly before our view, how can we trifle with its declarations respecting our own individual transgressions? There is a second death—the true king of terrors—"the most terrible of all terribles," and his dart is sin, and its strength is the law; but if, by neglecting or refusing Him who can secure from this king of terrors, we subject ourselves to his power, that dart will inflict a wound and shed a venom which will diffuse intolerable suffering through the soul for ever, and, becoming his captives, we shall never more be "prisoners of hope."

Let us now proceed to inquire how death is to be deprived of the dart with which sin has furnished it, and the strength with which the law has armed this dart. "God," says the apostle, "giveth[2] us the victory" over death, in a glorious resurrection, "through our Lord Jesus Christ." Christ delivers us, and God delivers us through Christ. Let us shortly illustrate these two propositions. They bring the whole truth before our minds.

Christ delivers us from death,—and delivers us by "taking away sin," "making an end of sin," which is the dart of

[1] Heb. iv. 12.

[2] "τῷ διδόντι, the present, denoting the certain future."—De Wette.

death, and "magnifying and making honourable the law," which gives strength to sin as the dart of death. He is "the abolisher of death." It may seem to a superficial thinker a very easy matter for God to abolish death, and to give man the victory. It might seem as if He who bade man live, and he lived (and he would have continued to live for ever had He not bidden him die), had nothing to do but to will it, and dead men would live, and mortal men become immortal. All this might have been, had not sin been death's dart, and the law that dart's power. But death is a part of the moral government of God. It is the assertion of a Divine right—the execution of a Divine threatening. Death cannot be abolished by a simple act of the Divine will—a single stroke of the Divine arm. "God cannot deny himself." The putting down death by mere power would be as if a king were to employ his army to rescue a criminal whom his judges had, according to law, doomed to punishment. Death could not be abolished till something was done which should better do what death is intended to do —express that malignity which is in sin, and vindicate the excellence of the law, and the authority, and righteousness, and benignity of the Lawgiver. It was by accomplishing this, that Christ laid the foundation of "giving us the victory" over death.

And how did he do this? He, the Eternal Life, who was with the Father before the world was, having become flesh, submitted to death, the Just One in the room of the unjust. By thus dying, he destroyed death; and by submitting to descend into the grave, he secured his own return—the Captain of salvation, the Leader of the deliverance from that gloomy region. That death expiated sin, and honoured the law more than the keeping men for ever under the power of death could have done. The just Author may now be the just, as well as the merciful, Repealer of the law of mortality; and, in the exercise of that unlimited power and authority which he procured by his

obedience unto death, Christ will actually give us the victory over the last enemy. He has come from the grave, and gone to heaven: he will come from heaven, and bring us from the grave. He will come the second time for the complete salvation of those who look for him. It is the will of the Father, who sent him, concerning "all whom He has given him," not only that he should lose none—not one—of them, but that he "should lose nothing" of them.[1]—In body, as well as in soul, shall they be redeemed. "The hour is coming when all who are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, to the resurrection of life." "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then they which are alive and remain shall," having been changed, "be caught up together" with those awakened from the sleep of death "in the clouds,"—myriads on myriads, ten thousand times ten thousand,—"to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall they ever be with the Lord." "For we look for the Saviour from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." [2]

All this is done by our Lord Jesus Christ; but it is equally true, and it is equally brought before our minds by the apostle, that this is done by God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. In the new creation, "all things are of God," by Christ Jesus. In saving us, he "finishes the work which the Father gave him to do." God gives us the victory over death in the resurrection, inasmuch as the whole wondrous plan originated in the counsel of his will; He constituted his Son our representative and deliverer; He made to meet on him "the iniquity of us all;" and inasmuch as He invested

[1] John vi. 39, οὐδέν. [2] 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. Phil. iii. 20, 21.

him with the power and authority, in the exercise of which he destroys death and delivers its captives, it is true of this, as well as of the other parts of the work of Christ, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for whatsoever things He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."

For this victory over death which God will assuredly give his people, through our Lord Jesus Christ, the apostle offers devout thanksgiving. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." And is it not meet that all the saved should join in the solemn ascription? Is not such a resurrection a blessing of high value —a blessing we had forfeited, and never could have repurchased for ourselves? Is it not a blessing which has cost Him who gave it us much?—He has "not spared his Son, but delivered him up for us all;" and he must become the victim of death, that we, his captives, might be delivered. Is it not a blessing, in the procuring and bestowing of which a most illustrious display is made of all that is great and gracious—all that is majestic and condescending—in the Divine character,—all that is fitted to excite esteem, admiration, gratitude, and love? "Thanks, then, be to him who giveth us the victory;" who hath conquered *for* us—who will conquer *in* us—"the last enemy." "Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. Thy right hand is become glorious in power; thy right hand hath dashed in pieces the enemy." "Blessed be the Lord, the God of our salvation. He that is our God, is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints." "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power." "Blessing, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever."[1]

[1] "With what acclamations will saints, rising from the dead, applaud the Redeemer! How will the heaven of heavens resound his praises for ever!

Happy are they who, like the apostle, in the spirit of faith, can by anticipation enjoy the solemn delights of the resurrection-day, and yield a glad obedience to the invitation of our christian Psalmist,—

"Let Faith exalt her joyful voice,
And thus begin to sing:
O Grave! where is thy triumph now?
And where, O Death! thy sting?

"Thy sting was sin, and conscious guilt,
'Twas this that arm'd thy dart;
The law gave sin its strength and force
To pierce the sinner's heart.

"But God, whose name be ever bless'd!
Disarms the foe we dread,
And makes us conqu'rors when we die,
Through Christ our living head."

§ 2. *The Exhortation.*

It now only remains that we turn our attention a little to the second part of this concluding section, the solemn exhortation,—"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."[1] And here we will consider, first, the apostle's exhortation; and, secondly, the motives by which he enforces it. The exhortation is, "Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." The motives are those

'Thanks be to God' will be the burden of their song; and angels will join in the chorus, and declare their consent with a loud Amen, Hallelujah."—M. HENRY. The words of the ancient hymn quoted by Gregory Nazianzen are striking:—

"Ποῦ σου, θάνατε, τὸ κέντρον;
Ποῦ σου, ᾅδη, τὸ νῖκος; Τῷ σταυρῷ βέβλησαι,
Τῷ ζωοποιῷ τεθανάτωσαι.
Ἄπνους, νεκρὸς, ἀκίνητος, ἀνενεργητικός,
Καὶ εἰ τὸ σχῆμα σώζεις ὄφεως,
Ἐν ὑψει στηλιτευόμενος."

[1] Dr John Worthington's "Practical Discourse on the Resurrection and a Reward to come," from this text, is well worth perusing. Indeed all his works, though somewhat deficient in evangelical statement, like Scougal's "Life of God in the Soul of Man," and Lucas on "Happiness," may be turned to good account by ministers, both for their personal improvement, and for giving a rich practical and experimental character to their pulpit labours.

which are folded up in the introductory word, "Therefore," —looking back to the whole of the statements made in the preceding part of the chapter, and those which are expressed in the concluding clause of the verse—"Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." From the construction of the verse, it is likely the apostle meant the first set of motives as incentives, primarily, to the exhortation to "be stedfast and unmoveable," and the last consideration as peculiarly fitted to urge to an "always abounding in the work of the Lord." But all the motives adduced are fitted to enforce all the duties enjoined.

(1.) *The duties enjoined.*

In the exhortation, the apostle calls on the Corinthians to "be stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." By some interpreters the apostle has been supposed to enjoin three things,—stedfastness in faith, immovability in hope, and persevering, increasing activity in the discharge of active duty. I am rather inclined to think that the expression—"stedfast, unmoveable," is, according to a common figure of speech (hendiadys), just equivalent to—'immoveably stedfast;' and that it has a reference not only to the faith and hope of the Gospel, but to the whole of that frame of thought, and feeling, and action, which naturally grows out of that faith and hope: and that the leading idea in the second exhortation—"always abounding in the work of the Lord," is constant advancement, every day excelling others and ourselves in the performance of those duties which, as enjoined by our Lord Jesus, may with the utmost propriety be termed "the work of the Lord."

1. *Immoveable stedfastness.*

The first duty which the apostle enjoins, is immoveable stedfastness. By this we are by no means to understand that the apostle considered the Corinthians as persons who had no more attainments to make in Christianity. On the

contrary, no man was more desirous than he that Christians should not think that they had attained, or were already perfect. He urges them to "grow up in all things to him who is the head;" to "follow after, that they may apprehend that for which also they are apprehended of Christ Jesus." His object is not to obstruct them in their going forward, but to prevent their going back. He wishes them to keep the ground they have gained, as absolutely necessary to their "forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth to those which are before." His desire was, that they should not be like "children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." He wished them to "hold fast the form of sound words, which they had heard of him," and his apostolic brethren, "in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." He wished that they might be "stablished and settled;" that they might "stand fast in the faith, quit them like men, and be strong;" that they might "continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel;"[1] that they might "hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of their hope stedfast to the end;" that they might be "rooted and stablished in the truth, as they had been taught;" that they should not be "double-minded men"—men who have so many minds, at different times, that they can scarcely be said to have any mind, and who, consequently, are apt to be "unstable in all their ways;" that they should "hold fast what they had attained," as the only means of making farther attainments—not being "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,"—but "continuing in the things which they had learned, and been assured of, knowing of whom they had learned them." He had, no doubt, a particular reference to the subject on which he was writing. His desire was, that they might hold fast

[1] Phil. iii. 12. Eph. iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 13. Col. i. 23. Heb. iii. 6. 2 Tim. iii. 14.

the great doctrines respecting Christ's resurrection and their own, and the high and holy hopes with which the faith of these doctrines had inspired them; and it was in the highest degree reasonable that they should do so, for these doctrines had been explicitly revealed, and very abundantly confirmed.

They were to continue immoveably stedfast, in opposition to the attempts of false teachers to lead them to abandon the faith or profession of the truth as it is in Jesus. They were to call on such men to produce their credentials, and show cause why they opposed what men had said, who, by their miracles, had proved that they "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." They were not to "believe every spirit"—they were to "try the spirits whether they were of God;" they were to "prove all things," and "hold fast that which is good."[1] Their appeal was to be "to the law and to the testimony"—to the words of the holy prophets and apostles of the Lord Jesus; and however specious might be the representations of men who deviated from the course of faith and practice prescribed by them, their language ought to be, "What is the chaff to the wheat?"

They were also to continue immoveable, in opposition to all the hardships and troubles to which their stedfastness in christian faith and duty might expose them. Like the apostle, they were to say of bonds and afflictions, of whatever kind, "none of these things move us." Why should they? they do not alter the truth or reason of things; they will soon be over. With a good conscience, and a moderate degree of manliness, they are not very difficult to bear; and these "light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work"—for him who, under them, "continues stedfast and immoveable"—"a far more exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory."

Still farther, they must be immoveably stedfast amid the

[1] 1 John iv. 1. 1 Thess. v. 21.

allurements and blandishments of the world. They must not allow "the deceitfulness of riches, or the lusts of other things," to enfeeble their apprehensions or cool their affections in reference to "things that are unseen and eternal."

Finally, here, they must be immoveably stedfast, notwithstanding the unsteadiness and apostasy of others. In all ages of Christianity, there have been men who, "with respect to faith and good conscience, have made shipwreck;" and not unfrequently, among their number, men who once stood high in the estimation of the church and the world—"who seemed to be somewhat"—who "seemed to be pillars." Such men generally "overthrow the faith of some." Their doctrine "eats or spreads like a canker," and injures—often fatally—the spiritual health of those who are exposed to the contagion. It is wise in Christians to "cease to hear the instruction that causeth to err." It is a dangerous thing for Christians to be ever ready to listen to men bringing "strange and diverse doctrines." They have not often profited them that have been occupied therein. It is wiser, as the Apostle Peter advises, to "beware lest we also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from our own stedfastness."[1] So much for the explication of the first duty which the apostle here enjoins,—stedfastness and immoveableness—immoveable stedfastness in the faith of the truth—in the hope of eternal life—and in all the holy tempers and habits to which this faith and hope naturally give origin.

2. *Excelling in the work of the Lord.*

The second duty to which the apostle exhorts is, the "always abounding"[2]—or excelling—"in the work of the Lord." "The work of the Lord"[3] is a general name for christian duty, including all that the Christian is to do for

[1] Heb. xiii. 9. 2 Pet. iii. 17. [2] περισσεύοντες.
[3] ἔργῳ τοῦ Κυρίου.—ὃν ὁ Κύριος ἀγαπᾷ καὶ ἐπαιτεῖ παρ' ἡμῶν.

promoting his own spiritual improvement, and for advancing the cause of truth and holiness in the church and in the world. His work, as to himself, is to "deny himself, and take up his cross and follow his Lord,"—to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." With respect to others, it is "to do good and communicate;" to "do good unto all men, as he has opportunity, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."[1] A constant course of well-doing—that is his work. This is "the work of the Lord." This is the work He has enjoined, and to perform which He calls men into his vineyard. There is no real religion, which is not, at the same time, practical religion. High speculations and ecstatic raptures are worse than useless, if they do not lead to diligence in "the work of the Lord."

The command of the apostle is, not only that they engage in this work, but that they "abound" in it. Christians should excel in it—excel themselves—excel others.

They should seek to excel themselves. They should never rest satisfied with their attainments. As they have "received how they ought to walk and to please God, so they should abound more and more." They must not "be weary in well-doing." They must "go on to perfection." And, as they advance, they must not slacken their pace, but mend it. The nearer they are to the goal, the faster ought they to run. "Their last works should be more than their first."[2] They should "give all diligence to add to their faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge: and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly-kindness; and to brotherly-kindness, charity." They are to have these things in them, and to abound therein, that they be not idle "nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;" "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord,"—*i. e.*, 'un-

weariedly active, unabatedly zealous, in "the work of the Lord."'[1]

Nor should Christians seek to "abound"—that is, to excel—"in the work of the Lord" in reference only to the present attainments of themselves, but also of those around them. Though the love of others should wax cold, they must be "a people zealous of good works." They should go earlier than others into the vineyard, and work harder there. They should be "patterns of good works," and "shine as lights in the world." As the apocryphal writer says, "Their life must not be like other men's; their ways must be of another fashion."[2] Their righteousness must "exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees." Like Caleb, they must be "men of another spirit" from the bulk of mankind; and show that they have become so, by "following the Lord fully." Even among real Christians, it is a good strife to "provoke to love and good works"—to strive who shall do most for God, live the holiest life, and do most good to the church and to the world. To do this, ay, and to be conscious that we are doing it, is no way inconsistent with humility. Witness the experience of perhaps the most active and the most humble Christian that ever lived: "I laboured more abundantly than they all," says Paul, "though I am nothing." "By the grace of God I am what I am."[3] Christians should all seek to be not only really, but eminently holy,—not only in some degree, but in a high degree, useful. They must never forget who it is that says to them, "What do ye more than others?"

Before leaving this part of the subject, it may be proper to remark, that the two duties which the apostle enjoins are closely connected,—immoveable stedfastness, and persevering, increasing exertion. Clear apprehensions—strong persuasions—in reference to christian truth, are, as it were, the root—and a holy life is the fruit—of the tree of christian

[1] 1 Thess. iv. 1. Gal. vi. 9. 2 Pet. i. 5-9. [2] Wisd. ii. 15. [3] 1 Cor. xv. 10.

experience. According to a man's faith, so is it to him. If we are not "stedfast and immoveable" in the faith and hope of the Gospel, it is impossible that we shall continue to "abound in the work of the Lord;" and, on the other hand, indulged indolence in "the work of the Lord" is very likely to have a mischievous re-action, and to exercise a malignant influence, on the state both of our faith and holiness.

(2.) *The motives urged.*

I proceed now, very briefly, to notice the motives by which the apostle enforces these exhortations. They are either those folded up in the first word in the sentence, "therefore," or expressed in the last clause in it—"forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Let us look at these in their order.

The word "therefore" looks back to the contents of the whole discussion. It is equivalent to, 'Since these things are so;' 'for these reasons.' Now, what are the leading statements in the preceding context? "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures;" "Christ rose again from the dead, according to the Scriptures." These great facts are established on the most satisfactory evidence. Christ's resurrection secures the resurrection of all his people, for his resurrection was the result of a death, in which he made atonement for their sins, and was the prelude to a state of dignity and power, in the exercise of which he can and will destroy all their enemies. And the resurrection secured for Christ's people, is not merely restoration to lost life, but elevation to a higher kind of life—the investiture with "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading." These are the great doctrinal statements contained in this chapter, and they are all fitted to act as motives to the duties enjoined in the concluding verse. Here we have an illustration of the principle, that the doctrinal statements and the practical requirements of Christianity

are very closely connected. Its doctrines cannot be believed without leading to a discharge of its duties; and its duties cannot be discharged without a knowledge and belief of its doctrines. If Christ died for us—in our room—for our sins—on their account—is it not fit that "we should live not to ourselves, but to him who died for us"? If Christ "rose again for our justification," is it not fit that we, risen with him, "should seek the things which are above"? and, as alive from the dead, yield ourselves to God, who raised our Lord, ourselves as His servants, and our members "as instruments of righteousness"?[1] If He who raised our Lord from the dead is, by him, to quicken our mortal bodies, is it not right that we should glorify him, even now, in those bodies, which, as well as our spirits, are his? What powerful incentives and encouragements to immoveable stedfastness—to ever-increasing activity—in the work of the Lord, are ministered by the doctrines of our Lord's atoning death and mediatorial reign! And how is the hope of attaining to such a resurrection of the dead calculated to lead us to "forget the things that are behind, and reach forth to those which are before, and press" onward along the prescribed course, that we may obtain "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,"—to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God!"[2]

These are but hints, to be followed out in your retirements, when you carefully review the whole of the chapter, in its bearing on the concluding exhortation, and endeavour to bring all the force of motive that is in this "therefore" to bear on your christian character and conduct. This is the right practical improvement of the illustrations

[1] Col. iii. 1. Rom. vi. 9-14.

[2] Heb. xii. 1, 2.

of the doctrines respecting Jesus and the resurrection, which have been laid before you.

Besides, this general reference to the whole of the statements he had made respecting the resurrection, as containing motives to the duties he is enjoining, the apostle particularises one consideration, as peculiarly fitted to urge to stedfastness, perseverance, and activity in christian duty: "Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." The "labour" here is the same thing as "the work" in the preceding clause, only it is here presented to us as something, in the performance of which we must expect difficulty, and submit to fatigue. The work of the Lord in heaven will not be labour. It will be exertion in a high degree, but it will be pleasurable exertion. Even here the saint has much pleasure in his work, but still it is toil. Both from the fightings without, and the fears within—both from the attacks of our spiritual enemies, and the workings of our own imperfectly subdued fallen nature,—"the work of the Lord" is a laborious employment. He mistakes the nature of religion, and the state alike of the world within and the world around the Christian, who thinks otherwise.

The expression, "in the Lord," may either be connected with "your labour," or with "not in vain."[1] In this last case, the meaning is, that through the Lord—by the help of the Lord—through the efficacy of his atonement—the influence of his Spirit—the care of his providence,—"your labour shall not be in vain." I rather think it ought to be construed with "your labour"—"your labour in the Lord,"—'your christian labours—your labours in his service—united to him, depending on him.'

This "labour in the Lord shall not be in vain." 'It shall not be to no purpose; it shall in nowise lose its reward.' More is meant in the phrase than meets the ear. It is

[1] "Τὸ δὲ, ἐν Κυρίῳ, ἢ ὅτι ὁ κόπος ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν Κυρίῳ, τουτέστιν, ὁ καὶ σὺν ἄνωθεν βοήθειαν ἔχων, ὡς ἐπὶ θεαρέστοις ἔργοις γενομένος· ἢ ὅτι παρὰ Κυρίῳ οὐ ματαιοθήσεται ὁ κόπος, ἀλλὰ λήψεσθε παρ' ἐκείνου τὰς ἀμοιβάς."—THEOPHYLACT.

equivalent to, 'It shall be assuredly and abundantly rewarded. You shall not "labour in vain, nor spend your trength for nought and in vain." Your labour shall obtain what the Apostle John calls a "full reward."' Christians must not, then, cast away their confidence, for it has great recompense of reward. They must not become "weary in well-doing, for in due season they shall reap if they faint not."

It is plain that the apostle had the glories of the resurrection, and of the state into which the resurrection is to introduce saints, immediately in view, when he used these words. Such a resurrection as he had been describing—a resurrection in incorruption, and power, and glory—was surely an abundant recompense for all the sacrifices, and toils, and privations, and sufferings to which they might be exposed in doing "the work of the Lord."

But it is not only inasmuch as the labour of the Christian in the Lord will assuredly be recompensed at the resurrection of the just, that that "labour shall not be in vain,"—it shall not be in vain even here. "Godliness has the promise of the life that now is." The Christian's labour is not all toil. "In keeping God's commandments he has great reward." "Great peace have they which love God's law."[1] Just in the degree in which Christians are "stedfast and unmoveable in doing the work of the Lord," just in the degree in which they labour in the Lord, and faint not, have they "the testimony of their conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not by worldly wisdom, have they their conversation in the world;" and it is in the "giving all diligence to add to their faith" every virtue, that they are to "make their calling and their election sure." An indolent Christian cannot be a happy Christian.

But it is when we look to and beyond the resurrection, that we see most clearly that the labour of Christians in the

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 8. Psal. xix. 11; cxix. 165.

Lord "is not in vain." *There* is the full "recompense of reward." "I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" These are they who were "stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord;"—these are they who laboured, laboured much, in the Lord. "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." [1]

And their reward shall be proportioned to their labour. "Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour." [2] To all who, by "a constant continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality," God will render eternal life; but still He will "render to every one according to his works." He who has gained five talents shall rule over five cities, and he who has gained ten talents shall rule over ten cities.

"Ye know," says the apostle, "that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." 'Whether you are among the waking or the sleeping at the coming of the Lord, your reward is secure.' The promise had come to them in "the word of the truth of the Gospel;" and that word had come to them

[1] Rev. vii. 9-17. [2] 1 Cor. iii. 8.

"not in word only, but in power, with the Holy Ghost, and much assurance;" so that it was known and felt by them to be the word of God, and not of man. They knew that it had been promised, and they knew who had promised it. They had believed, and they knew whom they had believed. They were persuaded He would keep what they had committed to him,—that he would perform that which he had promised to them. To all the suggestions of an unbelieving heart and an unbelieving world they could say, "Faithful is he who hath promised, who also will do it." "He is not a man, that he should lie; nor the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said it, and shall he not do it? Hath he promised it, and shall he not make it good?"

Let those of us who "have through grace believed," and who have "good hope through grace," open our minds and hearts to the influence of this powerful motive amid the toils of service. It is by no means the only—it is by no means the strongest—motive to immoveable stedfastness, persevering exertion, unwearying labour; but it is a powerful one. It is not to be compared with those motives which are founded on the law of God, and the grace of Christ Jesus. Yet Moses felt it, and counted "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." The Hebrew Christians felt it, when they "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had a more abiding substance." Jesus, the great pattern of disinterestedness, felt it; and, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."[1] Let not, then, the difficulty of our duties, the power of our enemies, or the severity of our afflictions, make a disheartening impression on our spirits. The bright morning of the resurrection—the end-

[1] Heb. xi. 26; xii. 2.

less, cloudless day of heaven—will more than compensate for all.

> "The more we toil and suffer here,
> The sweeter rest shall be."

"Be strong, then, and let not your hands be weak; for your work shall be rewarded." "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain."

ON

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

2 Timothy ii. 8.—"Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel."

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

To comply with this injunction of the apostle—an injunction as obligatory on us, as on Timothy the evangelist, to whom it was originally addressed,—we must be acquainted with the apostolic testimony in reference to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and with the evidence which gives that testimony a claim on our belief; and we must be also impressed with a sense of the interest we have in that event, and the importance of our habitually remembering it. My intention, then, in the following discourse, is to present you with a condensed statement of the apostolic testimony respecting our Lord's resurrection, and of the evidence on which it rests, and then to show you the importance of our remembering it, both as a ground of faith, and as a motive to duty.

To many it may appear something like a waste of time and labour to state, before a christian audience, the apostolic testimony and its evidence respecting the resurrection of Christ from the dead; and it may be asked, 'Why enter on a laborious, minute narrative of events, with which all whom you are addressing are familiarly acquainted,—a laborious

statement of evidence, in support of what not one of them denies, or even doubts?' The following plain statement appears to me to contain in it a satisfactory answer to these questions, and to present strong reasons for frequently bringing both the fact and the evidence of our Lord's resurrection before the minds of Christians.

The doctrine of the resurrection forms a part of that divine testimony, without the belief of which men cannot have their sins pardoned, their natures transformed, and their souls saved. Justifying faith, according to the apostle,[1] is faith "on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who," as he "was delivered for our offences"—*i. e.*, 'on account of our offences,'—"was raised again for our justification"—*i. e.*, 'on account of that finished work of atonement, on the ground of which we are justified.' "If thou believe in thine heart," says the apostle, in another passage,[2] "that God hath raised" the Lord Jesus "from the dead, thou shalt be saved." The gospel which the apostle preached to the Corinthians—and to which there is plainly a reference in the text, "my gospel,"—which they received, in which they stood, and by which they would be saved, if they kept it in memory, was not only "that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures," but "that he rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures."

Now, how is this faith in the resurrection of Christ, which is represented as necessary to salvation, to be produced, and maintained, and strengthened? If the question refer to the ultimate agency by which this is to be done, the answer is, 'By the effectual operation of the Holy Ghost.' The working of a mighty power, similar, as to efficacy, to that by which Christ was raised from the dead, is necessary so to open the eyes of the blinded human understanding, as to lead men so to attend to, as that they shall perceive, the meaning and the evidence of the divine testimony "that

[1] Rom. iv. 24, 25. [2] Rom. x. 9.

Christ was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification," and thus believe it, and persevere in believing it, to the saving of the soul. But, if the question refer to the instrumental means by which this is to be done, the answer is, ' By clear, distinct, often-repeated statements of the truth and its evidence.'

In comparatively few audiences, which a christian preacher is in this country called to address, are there to be found persons who deny this truth; but in still fewer are there not to be found multitudes who do not believe it. The greater part of those now referred to are taking it for granted that they believe this doctrine. They know that they have never doubted of it; but they know too, what is probably the reason of this, that they have never seriously thought of it. The question never interested them so much, as to lead them to inquire whether it should be answered in the negative or the affirmative. They can give no rational satisfactory answer to it; and that they do not believe the doctrine of our Lord's resurrection, is evident from the fact, that their conduct is not such as the enlightened faith of the resurrection of Christ uniformly produces. To such persons—and they form a large proportion in most assemblies which christian ministers are called to address,—statements of the truth and its evidence respecting the resurrection of Christ are obviously very necessary. Without them, how, but by a miracle, which we have no reason to expect, can such persons be brought into a state of salvation?

Nor are such statements unnecessary to those who, from an apprehension of the truth on this subject, in its meaning and evidence, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, have been led to believe it. Faith is maintained and strengthened in the same way in which it is produced. It is not enough to have believed; we must continue to believe. It is a matter of the last importance to a Christian, in reference to his improvement both in holiness and in comfort, that he should always be ready to give a satisfactory answer

to his own mind, when it makes a scrutiny, respecting the reason of the hope that is in him.[1] The whole fabric of our hope rests on the fact that Christ is risen from the dead. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain;" "ye are yet in your sins." It is obviously, then, of the greatest importance, that whenever doubt, from whatever cause, arises, we should be able to go down, with the torch of truth in our hand, and examine the foundation of our faith,[2] and obtain a renewed sense of security, from finding it fixed on the immoveable rock of truth, and come up, saying, 'No, we have not followed a "cunningly devised fable" when we believed that he who was "delivered for our offences," was "raised again for our justification." "The Lord is risen indeed."' We must never forget, that the faith by which we are justified, and sanctified, and saved, is not the persuasion of the goodness of our state, or the assurance of our salvation. These are very desirable things, if they rest on a secure foundation—very dangerous things otherwise: they are what every man should seek after, and what every Christian, if he take the right course, may obtain. But they are not the faith of the Gospel. Even in their best form, they are only effects, more or less direct, of that faith. That faith is not the belief of anything that is not to be found, in plain words, in the Bible, that perspicuous, well-attested revelation of the Divine mind and will: it is the belief of the testimony of God respecting his Son, one essential part of which is, that he, when he had been "delivered for our offences, rose again for our justification;" and this faith can be produced and maintained in the mind only by the individual being led, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, to lay hold of, and to keep hold of, the appropriate evidence on which this part of the Divine testimony rests. Listen, then, my brethren, to a statement of the apostolic testimony, and of

[1] 1 Pet. iii. 15. [2] Cecil.

its evidence, respecting the resurrection of Christ, that your faith and hope may be in God; that such of you as have not believed, may now be induced to receive the truth in the love of it, so as to be saved by it; and that such of you as have believed through grace, may be stablished, strengthened, settled—being filled with all the riches of the full assurance of understanding.

PART I.—THE APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY RESPECTING THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

THE first thing I mean to do, is to present you with a condensed statement of the apostolic testimony respecting the resurrection of Christ. We have a very brief compendium of it in the beginning of the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians,—"I declare unto you the Gospel." "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received," that Christ "rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time"—'a last-born child.' "Thus I preached, and thus ye believed." It may serve some good purpose to collect together, into one continuous narrative, the whole apostolic testimony in reference to the resurrection of Christ. This is, indeed, requisite to lay a solid foundation for what is to follow—an exhibition of the evidence on which this testimony has a claim on our belief.

Jesus Christ, after having abundantly proved by miracle his divine mission, and declared himself to be the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world,—who was to be "lifted up, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,"—who was to "lay down his life for his sheep, that he might take it again," and "give himself a ransom for many,"—was betrayed, by a false disciple, into the hands of his most inveterate enemies—the Jewish rulers,—and by them delivered into the hands of the Roman governor, who, in consequence of their practising on his fears, in opposition to his own avowed conviction of what was right, sentenced him to the cross; with the same breath declaring him innocent, and dooming him to the worst punishment which the worst criminal could deserve. The sentence was straightway carried into execution. After six hours of agony, Jesus expired on the accursed tree. It was a remarkable thing for a crucified person to die so soon. The circumstance attracted notice; and, before the governor allowed his body to be removed from the cross, he obtained satisfactory evidence that the victim of his infamous cowardice was really dead. A thrust from the spear of a Roman soldier had pierced his heart,—that of itself, had he not previously expired, would have produced death. An effusion of blood, mingled with water, which issued from the wound, seems to prove that he literally died of a broken heart—the proximate cause of death having been the bursting of that vital organ from intense anguish.[1]

No sooner was it evident that he was dead, than one of his disciples, belonging to the higher order of society—Joseph, a member of the Sanhedrim,—waited on the Roman governor, and requested permission to be allowed to pay the last mark of respect to the body of one whom he, in opposition to the great body of his associates, had regarded not only as an innocent and holy man, but as a divine messenger; and, on obtaining the necessary authority, he took the body down from the cross, and, assisted by Nicodemus, another Jew of high rank—"the master in Israel"—showing such respect

[1] John xix. 34. Mark xv. 44.

as the time and circumstance admitted,—hastily performed the obsequies, and placed the body, wound in linen clothes, with spices, in a new sepulchre, hewn out of the rock, in an adjoining garden, which was Joseph's property. By this time it must have been drawing near to the close of Friday; our Saviour having died about three o'clock, and the day closing, among the Jews, with the going down of the sun.

At the instigation of the Jewish rulers, who professed to be afraid lest the clandestine removal of the body, by the disciples of Jesus, might lay a foundation for farther delusion—by being represented as the fulfilment of a prediction he was said to have uttered, of rising again after three days,—a watch of Roman soldiers was set over the sepulchre, the entrance to which was securely closed and sealed.[1] During the whole of that night, and the next day, and the succeeding night, all remained quiet at the sepulchre. Immediately, on the Sabbath-day being passed—that is, at six o'clock on Saturday evening,—a number of his female disciples—Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, and Joanna—bought sweet spices, that—being ignorant, apparently, of the appointment of the Roman guard at the sepulchre—they might, early in the morning, when all was still, come and anoint the dead body of their murdered Lord. The principal care of preparing the perfumes seems to have been entrusted to a party, of whom Joanna was one—a party of which Luke alone speaks,—who were to be at the sepulchre about sun-rising. The two Marys, and Salome, of whom Matthew and Mark principally write, set out at an earlier hour, while it was yet scarce light. Their object was to "see"—that is, to survey—the sepulchre, and ascertain particularly whether it was practicable to remove the large stone which closed the opening of the sepulchre, and was an obstacle in the way of accomplishing their pious purpose.

[1] Matt. xxvii. 57–66. Mark xv. 43, 47. Luke xxiii. 50, 51. John xix. 38–42.

Previously to their setting out, or as they were going towards the sepulchre, strange movements were taking place there. The bands of death were unloosing. "There was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door" of the sepulchre, "and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men;"[1] and, on recovering their senses, retired with precipitation from a scene so full of terror—part of them going to the Jewish rulers, part of them into the city, and relating what had happened. The minute particulars of the resurrection itself are not recorded. It is enough that we know that, amid those awful preternatural appearances, "the God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep."

Ere the first band of female disciples arrived in the immediate vicinity of the sepulchre, the Roman guards had disappeared. Jesus had retired; the angel had left his seat on the removed stone; and all was silent and quiet around. As they approached, they were conversing about the removing of the stone; but, on approaching nearer, they saw that it had been rolled away, and that the sepulchre was open. Mary Magdalene, concluding that the sepulchre had been violated, and the body of Jesus had been taken away for the purpose—as she, no doubt, thought—of being ignominiously treated by his inveterate enemies, seems to have left her companions to wait for Joanna and her company, and hastened to inform Peter and John what she had seen, and what she feared.

No sooner was she gone than Mary and Salome went forward to the sepulchre, and, to their astonishment, saw an angel in the form of a young man, clothed in a long white garment, sitting on the right side of the tomb, who said to

[1] Matt. xxviii. 1, 5. Mark xvi. 1-5.

them, "Be not affrighted. Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him." "And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead, and that he goeth before you into Galilee." Overwhelmed with astonishment at what they had seen and heard, they returned towards the city.[1]

Peter and John had immediately set out on hearing Mary Magdalene's message, but coming very probably from a different quarter of the city, did not meet the returning women. Mary Magdalene accompanied the apostles. John, who outran Peter, was first at the sepulchre. Looking down into the tomb, and seeing the shroud decently disposed, but no corpse there, he started back with consternation. Peter, taking courage, descended into the tomb: John followed; and now calling to mind the intimations which Christ had given of his resurrection, faith began to spring up in his soul, and he thus obtained the blessing from his Master—of him "that had not seen, and yet had believed."[2] The two apostles now returned to the city;—they "went away again unto their own home"

Mary Magdalene, left alone at the sepulchre, drew near, and stooped down, weeping, to look into it. As she gazed, she saw what were two angels, "the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain." These she seems to have mistaken for two young men, whom accident might have brought there; for, on their saying to her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" she merely replies, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." On turning herself back, she saw a man whom she took to be the gardener. It was still the morning twilight, and Mary's eyes were dim with tears. The seeming stranger asked her the cause of her weeping, and inquired whom she was in quest of. Supposing the

[1] Matt. xxviii. 5-9. Mark xvi. 4-9. [2] John xx. 29.

object which filled her mind to be present to his, she replied, "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." The stranger repeated her name in a voice and with tones to which she was familiar, and which she had thought she was to hear no more. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni," my Lord. Her first impulse is to cast herself at his feet, but he prevents her by saying, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." The risen Saviour seems then suddenly to have left her, and appeared to her companions, who by this time, probably, were drawing near the city. "As they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." And he gave them the same message which they had already received from the angel. "Be not afraid," said he; "go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me."[1]

While these things were passing at some distance from the sepulchre, and the scene there was now clear, Joanna and her company, of whom the Evangelist Luke alone speaks, arrived, bringing the spices. They were surprised to find the stone rolled away; and, on looking into the sepulchre, they saw that the body of the Lord Jesus was not there. "And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men," in appearance, in reality angels, "stood by them in shining garments: and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen:" and put them in mind of words, respecting his death and resurrection, spoken by the Saviour in Galilee.[2] Some of this second company of female dis-

[1] John xx. 1-19 [2] Luke xxiv. 1-11.

ciples, to whom no message to the apostles had been entrusted, seem to have reached the eleven before Mary and Salome, and told them that they had "seen a vision of angels," who asserted that Jesus was risen.[1] On this, Peter appears a second time to have repaired to the sepulchre, and, in the course of this visit, to have seen Jesus. Of this appearance we have no particular account in the gospel history. It is referred to, however, by Luke, when he represents the eleven, and those who were with them, saying to the two disciples returned from Emmaus, as they entered, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon;" and the Apostle Paul, in the passage already referred to, speaks of his being "seen of Cephas" before any of his appearances to the other disciples.[2]

In the course of this eventful day, two disciples, not of the number of apostles, were going in the afternoon to Emmaus, a village about seven miles from Jerusalem. They had heard of the sepulchre being found empty, and of Joanna and her companions' vision of angels; but they had not heard of any appearance of Jesus. As they walked, they conversed sorrowfully of what had occurred, of their fond expectations, and of their sad disappointment. While absorbed in these themes, they were joined by an apparent stranger. He inquired into the subject they were talking of, which was obviously of a melancholy kind,—took part in their conversation, expounded the Scriptures in reference to the Messiah, and pointed out the mistakes into which they had fallen in reference to their Master. Under the power of his words, their "hearts burned within them," and hope began again to dawn on their souls. It was not, however, till they were seated at table, that, on the stranger taking the place of the host, and breaking bread and blessing it, they recognised in him their risen Lord; and he had no sooner disclosed himself to them, than he immediately, and

[1] Luke xxiv. 22, 23. [2] Luke xxiv. 34. 1 Cor. xv. 5.

in some mysterious way, left them. The slowness of their recognition must appear strange; but the time of it, when he did what they had so often seen him do, is, as Neander remarks, entirely natural. They had no doubt, however, that now they had seen their risen Lord. They immediately returned to Jerusalem, and went directly to the place where the apostles were, to communicate the glad news; and, on entering, were greeted with these words,—"The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon."[1]

As the evening of this most wonderful day advanced, when all the apostles, with the exception of Thomas, were assembled with closed doors, Jesus suddenly appeared in the midst of them with the usual salutation, "Peace be unto you," which must have brought back his parting farewell—"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." He mildly upbraided them with the hardness of their heart, *i. e.*, the impenetrability of their understandings, the obstinacy of their doubting minds,—the difficulty with which they could be persuaded that he was indeed risen from the dead—that he was himself; for "they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." He ate with them, bade them handle him, and showed them the marks of the nails in his hands and feet, and of the spear in his side. He explained to them the Scriptures concerning himself, breathed on them, and gave them the Holy Spirit, commissioned them to preach the Gospel to every creature, and parted with them, "announcing to them," as Neander says, "the fellowship of peace with himself, and consecrating them as messengers of peace to all mankind."[2]

On the first day of the week after his resurrection, he again suddenly made his appearance in the midst of the apostles, assembled with shut doors for fear of the Jews. Thomas, who had asserted that nothing but the testimony of his senses could convince him of his Master's resurrection,

[1] Luke xxiv. 13-36. [2] John xx. 19-24. Mark xvi. 14.

was now present. Referring to the incredulous apostle's own words, which must have conveyed to his mind the idea of his Master's omniscience, Jesus bade him examine his body as closely as he pleased, to ascertain its reality and identity; but Thomas found such a scrutiny utterly uncalled for, and, with mingled shame and joy, exclaimed, "My Lord, and my God." [1]

Soon after, probably in the course of that week, the disciples left Jerusalem, and went into Galilee. There our Lord seems often to have met with them, though we have a particular account of only two of these meetings. Seven of the disciples were fishing in the sea of Galilee. During the whole night they had caught nothing. Early in the morning Jesus appeared on the shore, and asked—kindly, as was his wont—"Children, have ye any meat?" When they replied in the negative, he bade them cast the net anew on the right side of the vessel. He was at some distance, and it was the morning twilight. John was the first to recognise the voice of his Master and Friend. Peter, with characteristic eagerness, cast himself into the sea, and swam ashore. A repast was ready for them, prepared by the power which they had seen exerted in the feeding of thousands. He gently reminded Peter of his promise, rashly made, soon broken,—re-assured him of his love,—restored him to the confidence of his brethren,—repressed his characteristic forwardness, and told him what great things he should suffer for his Master's sake.[2]

On another occasion, according to appointment, he met with his disciples on a mountain in Galilee. It is probably to this appearance that Paul refers, when he says, that "he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once," the majority of whom were alive at the time he wrote. They had come together, expecting to meet with him. Nor were they disappointed. When did he ever break his pro-

[1] John xx. 24-29.

[2] John xxi. 1-19.

mise? On his appearance in the distance, "some doubted." The great body recognised him even there, and bowed in lowly reverence before him. As he approached, all doubts vanished, and he reminded the apostles anew of their calling —to preach his Gospel to all nations, and to admit men of all nations, by baptism, into his communion and discipleship,—assured them that "all power was given to *him* in heaven and in earth" to establish the kingdom of God, and promised that he would be with *them*, even until the consummation of that kingdom.[1]

The apostles were then instructed to return to Jerusalem, to witness his departure to heaven, and to wait for the promised communication of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. It was probably there that the revelation of himself to his brother, or near relation, James, took place, of which the Apostle Paul speaks; and also that, to all the apostles, spoken of in the same paragraph.[2]

"Being assembled together with them," he "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which they had heard of him;" cautioned them against expecting the "restoration of the kingdom to Israel," in the sense they understood these words; and told them that they should "receive power, after that the Holy Ghost was come upon them;" and should be *his* "witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."[3]

And now he has literally *finished* the work given him to do upon earth. "Through the Holy Ghost, he has given commandments unto the apostles, whom he had chosen; he has showed himself alive, after his passion, by many infallible proofs;" he has been "seen of them often during forty days," and has "spoken to them of the kingdom of God." On a day never to be forgotten on earth or in heaven, he met with them for the last time here below, and "led them

[1] Matt. xxviii. 16-20. [2] Luke xxiv. 49. 1 Cor. xv. 7. [3] Acts i. 4-9.

out as far as to Bethany; and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them"—being "taken up, and received by a cloud out of their sight,"—"and carried up into heaven," and "sat on the right of God." "And, while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."[1]

From that hour the heavens, which received his glorified humanity, have been, ever since, its habitual abode, and will continue to be so, till "he come the second time, unto salvation." Yet has the risen Saviour, though usually dwelling in heaven, been seen on the earth. "He was seen of me," says Paul, in his gospel; "he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time,"[2]—*i. e.*, 'as a last-born child.' The apostle refers not to the appearances of Christ to him in dreams and mental visions, which seem to have been frequent, but to his personal appearance to him in the way to Damascus. He "saw the Lord in the way." It is all but certain that Paul must have seen Jesus—probably often—before his death, so that he could easily recognise him. He appeared to him in the midst of the glory which was the token of the peculiar presence of Divinity, and, with an audible voice, proclaimed, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee: delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto

[1] Luke xxiv. 50-53. Acts i. 9-12.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 8.

God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."[1] And Paul "was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision;" but henceforth devoted the whole energy of his mind to sustain and extend the cause which, up to that hour, he had been seeking to destroy.

Such is a condensed view of the apostolic testimony respecting the resurrection of Christ. I will not insist that all the incidents referred to occurred exactly in the order I have stated them; but every one of them is stated to have taken place. And, after some consideration, this is what appears to *me* the most probable way of harmonising into one narrative the various, and sometimes seemingly inconsistent, though not in reality discordant, statements of the evangelical historians.

You are now furnished with the means of forming a judgment of what the testimony of the apostles respecting their risen Lord was,—not a general statement merely that he did rise from the dead, but a most circumstantial, minute detail of the facts, out of which grew their undoubted conviction that Jesus Christ, whom the Romans, instigated by the Jews, crucified, had been raised from the dead, and taken up to heaven, where he lives and reigns at the right hand of God.

PART II.—THE EVIDENCE OF THE APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY.

Our inquiry hitherto has been, 'What did the apostles say in reference to the resurrection of Jesus Christ?' our inquiry now is, 'Was what they said true?' We have heard their story—does it deserve our belief? To this question we are prepared to give an unhesitating affirmative reply, and to support that reply by varied, abundant, satisfactory

[1] Acts xxvi. 15-20.

evidence. We are ready to show, first, that there are a number of undoubted facts, which admit of no rational account but on the supposition of the reality of our Lord's resurrection, and the truth of the apostolic testimony; secondly, that, when scrutinised according to the strictest laws of evidence, the testimony of the apostles is credible; and, thirdly, that their testimony was confirmed by miraculous evidence. Let us examine these three statements in their order.

§ 1. *It accounts for undoubted facts, otherwise unaccountable.*

First, then, we observe, that there are a number of undoubted facts, of which no rational account can be given, but on the supposition of the reality of our Lord's resurrection, and the truth of the apostolic testimony respecting it. I will briefly call your attention to three of these. The sepulchre was found empty on the morning of the third day; a most remarkable change suddenly took place in the character and conduct of the apostles; and the testimony of the apostles, to a large extent, immediately obtained credit.

(1.) *The sepulchre being found empty.*

We say, first, the sepulchre was found empty on the morning of the third day; and no satisfactory account can be given of that fact, but what implies the reality of our Lord's resurrection, and the truth of the apostolic testimony respecting it. The only account which the ingenuity of infidelity has been able to devise, is, that the body was stolen by the disciples.[1] But, first, this is a statement, in favour of which there is no evidence; for, surely, none will say that the statement of the Roman guards is evidence. What-

[1] Matt. xxviii. 12-16.

ever it may do in the way of disproving, it can do nothing in the way of establishing, this statement. How could these men testify to what took place, when, according to their own showing, they were fast asleep? What confidence can you have either in the intelligence or in the honesty of such witnesses? How did they know that the body was stolen at all? how did they know that it was stolen by the disciples? They were asleep. At best, it could be but conjecture. But their story is not only absurd, it carries collusion upon the face of it. That a whole division of a Roman guard should be asleep at once, is incredible; and men in their circumstances would not have made such an acknowledgment of their negligence, without previous assurance of protection and impunity.

Apart, however, from the discredit which the origin of the report necessarily throws on it, in all considerate, unprejudiced minds, the account, that the disciples had stolen the body, is in itself incredible. It is impossible to assign a probable reason why the apostles should have formed such design. What could tempt them to engage in such an enterprise? What good could the possession of the dead body of their Master do to them? They surely did not dream that they could restore it to life; and, if it is to remain dead, where can it be better placed than in the sepulchre of one of the wealthiest and most respectable of his followers? Even had there been no Roman guard to prevent their getting possession of the body, it is impossible to conceive a feasible reason for their wishing to have it. How is the improbability increased, when you take into account their knowledge that the sepulchre was guarded, and connect with that the state of depression and alarm for themselves, into which the death of their Master had plunged them!

But, supposing that, for some inconceivable purpose, they had formed the design of possessing themselves of the body, it is obvious that there were insurmountable difficulties in the way of their carrying it into execution. They certainly

could not count on finding all the Roman guards asleep; and, though they had, could the great stone be removed, and the body be taken away, without awakening them? Had the apostles money to bribe the guards, or were they able, even with their three swords, to overpower them? Besides all this, it was now full moon, and Jerusalem was full of strangers, many of whom were on such occasions obliged to encamp in the vicinity; and we know that the sepulchre was so near the city, as now to be enclosed within its walls. There are two questions that naturally occur: 'Why did the soldiers return to the city?' That was the last place they would have naturally thought of coming to. They would have betaken themselves to flight, and hid themselves on the mountains. And, 'Why were they not punished?' The Roman discipline was proverbially severe. Whence came so strange an exception? Peter's guards did not escape so easily.

It also deserves notice, that the very persons who first spread abroad this story of the body being stolen by the disciples, made it very evident, by their conduct, that they did not themselves believe it. When the apostles appeared publicly in Jerusalem, and even in the very temple, proclaiming the resurrection of their Master, what did the Jewish rulers do? They seized them, threatened them, beat them, scourged them, and commanded them to desist from their testimony.[1] But they neither produced the dead body to stop their mouths, which it would have done effectually, nor gave any reason why it could not be produced. Especially it deserves notice, they never charge the apostles to their face with stealing the body, nor attempt to expose them to the people as impostors. The question still comes back, 'What has become of the body? Supposing the disciples to have stolen it, what have they done with it? Have they re-interred it (and there was no sea or river at

[1] Acts iv. 1-23.

hand to throw it into)? Surely some traces of it must have been found! There does not seem to have been any search made—how came that?'

On the supposition of the resurrection, all is plain; but, on any other supposition, the disappearance of the body, when such care had been taken to secure it—when so much depended on an account being given of what had become of it after it disappeared, and when they, whom it most concerned to give such an account, had every facility for making the most thorough investigation,—is utterly unaccountable; and the absurd story to which an attempt was made to give currency, but the more clearly shows, that nothing approximating to a reasonable account of the fact could be given.

(2.) *The change which took place in the apostles.*

The second fact that I referred to, as at once indubitably true, and altogether unaccountable, except on the supposition of the resurrection, is the striking change which took place in the character and conduct of the apostles, within a very short period. The death of Jesus produced the effects on the minds of the apostles that might have been anticipated. It annihilated, at a stroke, their high-raised expectations. It confounded them. It sunk them in the deepest sadness, and filled them with the most alarming antici pations as to their personal safety. In their retirement, they mourned and wept, and probably thought of nothing but how they might safely escape from Jerusalem, and where they might best avoid the shame, if not the danger, to which their connection with the crucified Nazarene must, wherever they went, expose them.

In the course of a very few weeks, we find these very men, in the most public and sacred place about Jerusalem —in the temple,—proclaiming their glory and triumph in him who had been crucified,—declaring that God had raised him from the dead—taken him up to heaven—made him

both Lord and Christ,—persisting in their statements in the presence of the Sanhedrim, and, notwithstanding all their sufferings, manifesting an undaunted courage and a triumphant gladness.[1] Never did such a change—and it was a permanent one—take place within so short a period. There must have been a cause—an adequate cause. Could the possession of the dead body, known by them to have been obtained by fraud, have produced such effects? "There must be some intermediate historical fact," as Neander says, "to explain the transition. Something must have occurred to revive, with new power, the almost effaced impression; to bring back the flow of their faith, which had so far ebbed away. The re-appearance of Christ among his disciples, by a resurrection, is a connecting link in the chain of events, which cannot possibly be spared." This accounts for all that happened: nothing else can. Their sunken faith in his promises received a new impulse, when these promises were repeated to them by him, risen from the dead. This was the foundation of their henceforward immoveable confidence in him as the Messiah and Son of God, and of their stedfast hope, through their union with him, of their glorious resurrection and happy eternity. This, this only, accounts for their fearless testimony and their triumphant sufferings.

(3.) *The testimony being immediately, and to a great extent, credited.*

The only other undoubted fact, which is utterly unaccountable, but on the supposition of the truth of the apostles' testimony respecting the resurrection of Christ, to which I mean to turn your attention, is their immediately, to a considerable extent, obtaining credit to that testimony. That they did so, there can be no reasonable doubt. On the day of Pentecost, after an address by Peter in Jerusalem, "there were added unto them about three thousand

[1] Acts iv. 8-31.

souls;" and, ere long, we find their number amounting to five thousand.[1] Now, let any considerate man say if this could have taken place, had not the testimony of the apostles respecting the resurrection of Jesus been true, and been satisfactorily proved to be true. In the very place where the event was said to have taken place, they publicly declared it in the presence of those who, if it had not taken place, had every facility for showing that it had not, and had the greatest possible inducements to employ these facilities to the utmost: and they got many to credit it, and to show that they credited it, by making the greatest sacrifices, and devoting their whole future lives to the advancement of the cause of him whom men crucified, but whom God raised from the dead. Could their story have obtained credence anywhere, if it had not been true, and proved to be true? Especially, could it have been believed by thousands in Jerusalem, a few weeks after the event was said to have taken place? Just endeavour, in your minds, to transfer the events to our own time, and our own city, and the absurdity will glare out in all its monstrousness.

§ 2. *It stands all the ordinary tests of credibility.*

I proceed now to show, that the apostolic testimony, if examined on the principles on which we judge of the credibility of human testimony generally, will appear in the highest degree worthy of belief. We have here a sufficient number of witnesses. They are men of ordinary intelligence and good character. Their testimony is various, but not discordant. It is on a subject of which they were quite capable of forming a correct judgment—the identity of a person, with whom they had been in the habit of frequent and intimate intercourse for a number of years. They declare that they saw this person alive, who had been put to

[1] Acts ii. 41; iv. 4.

death, and buried; that they saw him, not merely separately, but together; not only once, but often; not only at night, but by day; not only at a distance, but near; that they not only saw him, but touched him, ate with him, conversed with him, examined his person, to satisfy their doubts; and had observed the marks of the wounds on his body, which had been inflicted at his execution. From these statements none of them ever varied; though, on the supposition of the falsehood of their testimony, it was impossible for them to expect any advantage from it, either in this world or in the next; and though their adherence to it exposed all of them to suffering and danger, and subjected many of them to torture and death, in their most alarming forms.

There are only three suppositions on which the conduct of the apostles, in giving testimony respecting the resurrection of Jesus Christ, can be accounted for. They must have been impostors, who attempted to deceive others; or they must have been enthusiasts, who were themselves deceived; or they must have been neither deceivers or deceived, but have honestly stated the truth, of which they had had the means of obtaining clear and certain knowledge.

That the apostles were not impostors, is so very evident, that I believe few, who deny our Lord's resurrection, would now choose to plead the cause on this hypothesis. This was the ground on which the earlier enemies of Christianity attempted to fight their battle; but their modern successors have generally abandoned it as altogether untenable. Though they had been disposed to impose on others—though they had been capable of such villainy as to pretend that their Master was risen, when in reality they had stolen his body,—we have already seen, that what lay at the foundation of such a scheme—the obtaining possession of the body,—was entirely beyond their reach. Indeed, when we reflect on the character and situation of the apostles—their fears for their own safety—the obvious difficulties, the apparent impossibilities, in the way of success, and the inevitable consequences

of detection and failure,—it seems in the last degree improbable that such an idea should ever enter into their minds. And their subsequent conduct—their personal toils, and dangers, and sufferings in the cause—their devoting the whole of their lives to the promulgation of their testimony—their constancy amid tortures, and in death, when nothing was to be gained in this world, and everything, according to their own principles, lost in the next, on the supposition of deceit,—all demonstrate that they were honest in making their statements; and that, if they were inconsistent with truth, it was because they themselves were imposed on. When we reflect on the humble condition of the apostles——their want of education—their poor occupations—their prejudices—their original timidity—their subsequent resolution—the sacrifices their testimony to the resurrection cost them—the labours and dangers they encountered in maintaining it—the virtue of their characters, so severely tried—the simplicity, so native, unaffected, and undesigning, manifested in their writings—we see evidence of their sincerity altogether irresistible; and we pity the stupidity, or abhor the malevolence, which has brought against such men the charge of fraudulently forging and executing a deep-laid scheme of imposition.[1]

There could not be fraud in the case; but might there not be delusion? He who has examined the subject with the greatest care will be readiest to reply, 'It is impossible.' Judging of the apostles both from their conduct and from their writings, they appear men of plain, sound understandings, not at all likely to be the dupes of their own imagination. The circumstance of the absence of the body has a strong and important bearing on this, as well as on some other portions of the argument. If the disciples stole the body, they could not be deceived—they must have known that Jesus was not risen again; and if they did not steal the

[1] Murray.

body, but were imposed on by their own imaginations, why did not the Jewish rulers produce the body, or give some rational account of its disappearance? This would have cured the apostles of their enthusiastic imaginations, in supposing that they saw Jesus when indeed they did not, and would have prevented effectually their statements from getting any credit among the people. It is, indeed, very obvious that the apostles, generally, did not expect the resurrection, and that it was by no means an easy matter to overcome their doubts as to their Master being risen indeed.

No hypothesis can account for the facts, but that which unravels all perplexities, removes all obscurities, explains all mysteries—that the apostles spoke the truth when they declared that "God had raised up Jesus," and that of this fact "they were witnesses."

Some shrink from believing the resurrection from its being strange, and, therefore, not to be expected. Strange undoubtedly it was; but it forms only a link in a series of strange things, and, therefore, it was just what was to be expected. Supposing that the strange things took place, which the gospels say preceded it—such as the incarnation, and the miracles of our Lord; and remembering the strange things that followed, in the conduct of the apostles, and the effects of their preaching, which no man can deny,—we find in the resurrection a fact which enables us to believe all that went before, and to account for all that has followed. Without it, the first would be incredible—the latter unaccountable. Some men find difficulty in believing the resurrection of Christ because it is a miraculous fact. But they have only a choice of difficulties; for, in refusing to believe it, they admit a still greater miracle. Judging according to the best ascertained laws of human nature, the falsehood of the apostolical testimony in all the circumstances of the case may well be pronounced something more than a miracle—an impossibility. If the resurrection of Christ be not proved, no fact is capable of proof by human testimony.

It has sometimes been asked, 'Why did not Christ appear publicly to all the people, especially to the magistrates?' It is enough to reply, 'Where there are witnesses enough, no judge or jury complains that there is no more.' The Jews, especially the Jewish rulers, had no reason to complain of want of evidence of the resurrection. Every soldier was to them a witness of their own choosing. They had the apostles' working miracles attesting it. It was not without reason that our Lord said, "Ye shall not see me till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The Jews were not in that disposition after the resurrection, nor are they in it yet.[1] "Would it have been beseeming that his sacred person should again be exposed to the insults and attempted injuries of his inveterate enemies? or, if that were prevented, was it meet that he should be made a show, to satisfy the vacant wonder, and gratify the idle curiosity, of a people athirst for excitement and voracious of marvels? In avoiding such a display of himself, he did no more than what a righteous respect for himself and his cause demanded. It was fit that he should refuse to exhibit himself as a spectacle to a people who had already treated him with the last extremes of contumely and cruelty, when he dwelt among them, 'a man approved of God, with signs and wonders,' well aware, as he was, that they who refused to hear him then, would not now believe, though they saw him risen from the dead."[2] It is not God's way to compel men to believe. He does not in this way outrage his own work. If unpersuadable men *will* not believe credible evidence, He lets them take their own way, but He lets them also take the consequences. Had the Jews not believed, on our Lord appearing to them alive, would not this have been perverted into evidence against his resurrection? and if they had, would it not have been said, 'It was a Jewish plan to advance their national importance'?[3]

[1] Trial of the Witnesses, 75-77.
[2] Brown Patterson.
[3] See Appendix, No. I.

§ 3. *It was confirmed by miracles.*

On this part of the subject, it only remains to remark, in the third place, that the apostolical testimony concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ was confirmed by miraculous evidence. "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus," said Peter, "whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree. him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."[1] The statements of the apostles respecting the resurrection of Christ were confirmed by the most stupendous miracles. Without teaching, without study, the apostles spoke foreign languages with fluency, and gave the most decided proofs of a divine mission. On their invoking the name of Jesus, the deaf heard, the dumb spake, the blind saw, the lame walked, the dead lived,—and they uniformly disclaimed being the authors of these miraculous salutary changes, and ascribed them all to the power and grace of their risen Lord. Could the dreams of enthusiasm, or the figments of imposture, be thus attested? Will the God of truth affix his seal, which cannot be counterfeited, to anything but truth? No;—while the apostles uttered their testimony, "God also bare witness, with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." And surely, if we receive, and ought to receive, "the witness of men," in the testimony of the apostles "the witness of God is greater. And this is the witness of God concerning his Son," that He has raised him from the dead, and given him glory, that our faith and hope might be in himself. Every miracle performed by the apostles was a proof of the resurrection of Christ, not only

[1] Acts v. 30-32.

as a token of the Divine approbation of those who bore testimony to that resurrection, but also as a fulfilment of the promise of the Saviour. His declaration was, "I go to the Father:" and "it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."[1] Every miracle, then, which they were enabled to perform, was an evidence that he lived and reigned, possessed and exercised all power in heaven and in earth. Such is an outline of the evidence of our Lord's resurrection,—a summary of the claims which the apostolic testimony respecting that resurrection has on our most entire confidence.

PART III.—IMPORTANCE OF THE APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY.

It only remains now, that, having illustrated *the apostolic testimony* respecting the resurrection of Christ, and its *evidence*, I make a few remarks on its *importance*,—or, in other words, show why the apostle calls on us to "*remember* that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to his gospel." Whether we look at Christianity *doctrinally* or practically, the importance of the resurrection of Christ will be very distinctly prominent.

§ 1. *Its doctrinal importance.*

If we look at Christianity doctrinally, we shall find it highly important to remember the resurrection of Christ, both as it attests the divine mission of Christ, and thus gives authority to all his doctrines, and as it gives special attestation to some of the most important, peculiar, and vital principles of Christianity.

[1] John xvi. 7.

(1.) *A general attestation of the truth of Christianity.*

It is a general attestation to the truth of Christianity. There are portions of the christian evidence which we could want, without the divine origin of the system being brought into jeopardy; but it is not so with the resurrection of Christ. "If Christ be not risen," Christianity cannot be true; its author must have been man; and its teachers either dreaming enthusiasts or artful impostors. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom," on the hypothesis, "he raised not up." On the other hand, no one miracle gives such comprehensive, as well as conclusive, evidence of the divine mission of Christ, as his resurrection.

As the fulfilment of Old Testament prediction respecting the Messiah, it proves that he is "he of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write." It marked him as "the Holy One" of God, whose soul, though in the separate state, was not to be allowed to remain there, and whose body, though laid in the grave, was "not to see corruption" there. It marked him as the "righteous servant" of Jehovah, who, after being "cut off out of the land of the living," and "having his grave appointed him with the wicked, and being with the rich while in the state of the dead," having "poured out his soul unto death" as an offering for sin, should yet "see his seed, and prolong his days."[1]

As the fulfilment of his own predictions, it proved him to be a true prophet—a messenger of God. He had said to the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," speaking "of the temple of his body;" and he had again, and again, and again told his disciples "how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be

[1] Psal. xvi. 10. Isa. liii. 8, 9.

raised again the third day."[1] No human foresight could have enabled him to utter these predictions. God spake by him; and, therefore, he is entitled to our implicit belief and obedience.

Still farther, as a remarkable manifestation of Divine power in his behalf, it is the seal of God attached to his commission. This may be said of every miracle performed by our Lord, or in reference to him; but there was something peculiar in the resurrection: it was the decision of the great question between him and his enemies. They said he was an impostor; he affirmed that he was the sent and the sealed of God. Because he called himself so, they put him to death; and to show that he was right, and that they were wrong, God did what none but God could do—undid what they had done—unloosed the bands of death, and restored him to life: thus proclaiming, in the ear of reason, as distinctly as He ever did with an audible voice from the opened heavens, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him." The Jews, as it were, wrote on his tomb, 'Here lies a deceiver of the people.' God blotted out that handwriting, and, in characters of imperishable brightness, inscribed, 'Here lay the revealer of God, the light of the world.'

In no one event is there folded up so much varied evidence of the truth of Christianity—of the divinity of Christ's mission, and therefore of the truth of all his doctrines, as in the resurrection. Well might the apostle term it "a powerful declaration."[2]

(2.) *A special attestation of particular doctrines.*

But it well deserves to be remembered, not on this account only,—it deserves to be remembered also for the special evidence it yields to some of the most momentous doctrines of Christianity.

[1] John ii. 19. Matt. xvi. 21.

[2] Rom. i. 4.

For example, in the first place, it gives evidence to that cardinal doctrine of our most holy faith—our Lord's divine Sonship,—that is, in other words, his essential Godhead—his being "the Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness," in contrast with his being "made of the seed of David" according to the flesh. While the Jews put him to death as an impostor, the immediate cause of their pronouncing sentence of death on him, and giving him over to the Roman governor to have that sentence executed, was his strongly asserting, under the sanction of an oath, that he was the Son of God, in a sense which they considered as equivalent to his making himself equal with God. "I adjure thee," said the high priest, "by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said." "Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy." "What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death." They put him to death;—the import of their act was, 'He is *not* the Son of God.' God raised him from the dead;—the import of His act was, 'He *is* the Son of God.'

Then, secondly, the resurrection of Christ should be remembered, as giving special attestation to the efficacy of his atonement—the acceptance of his sacrifice. When he died, he "died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." Had he not risen again, we should have had cause to fear that the end of his death had not been gained. Had he not risen, the conclusion to be drawn would have been—"We are yet in our sins;" guilt is not yet expiated; the debt is not discharged, for the Surety is detained in prison. But in his resurrection, we have a proof that his death has completed that work of atonement and satisfaction which lays the foundation of our justification. Who shall condemn those who are united to him who "died for sin once, but now lives for ever by the power of God"? The resurrection was the response from the Father to the declaration of his Son on the cross, "It is finished."

Then, thirdly, the resurrection of Christ should be remembered, as giving special attestation to the doctrine of the glorious resurrection and eternal life of all who believe in him. The resurrection of Christ proves the possibility of the resurrection of his people. To those who denied the possibility of a resurrection, at all times might have been proposed the unanswerable question, "*Why* should it be counted an impossible thing that God should raise the dead? Ye do err, not knowing the power of God." But now we can point to the empty grave of our Lord, and say, 'Christ *has* risen: may not we also rise?' But the resurrection of Christ proves not only the possibility of the resurrection and eternal life of his people,—it proves their certainty. He rose as their head; and the death of Adam, the federal head of the race, not more certainly drew after it the death of all who were in him, than the resurrection of "the second man, the Lord from heaven," draws after it the resurrection of all who are in him—all who are his. "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." He died, and they died in him: he lives; and "because he lives, they shall live also."

§ 2. *Its practical importance.*

But the resurrection of Christ has an important bearing on Christianity practically, as well as doctrinally, considered, which well entitles it to be habitually remembered by us. With a few remarks on this view of the subject, I will shut up the discourse. The resurrection of Christ ought to be remembered by us, for it is fitted to relieve the conscience burdened with guilt,—to sustain and comfort amid the afflictions of life,—and to present powerful motives to diligence

and perseverance in the discharge of duty. A word or two on each of these topics.

(1.) *It relieves the conscience burdened with guilt.*

First, then, we should remember the resurrection of Christ, because it is fitted to relieve the conscience burdened with guilt. There can be no acceptable duty, no real solid happiness, without a conscience purged from dead works. That can be obtained only by the sprinkling of the blood of atonement,—*i. e.*, by believing the truth respecting the atonement made by the blood of Christ. The efficacy of that atonement can be seen only by the man who believes our Lord's resurrection—the proof of his sacrifice having been accepted. The faith of his being "delivered for our offences" alone will not save: it must be conjoined with the faith of his being "raised again for our justification." The answer of a good conscience is to be obtained only through the resurrection of Jesus Christ; our confidence and hope in God rests on his having raised Christ from the dead, and given him glory. It is in "bringing again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant," that God appears to be "the God of peace." "Who can condemn" the believer? "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again."[1] The believing sinner, looking at the risen Saviour, may well say,—

> "Our Surety, freed, declares us free,
> For whose offences he was seized;
> In his release our own we see,
> And joy to view Jehovah pleased."

(2.) *It comforts amid the afflictions of life.*

Secondly, We should remember the resurrection of Jesus Christ, for it is fitted to sustain and comfort amid the afflic-

[1] Heb. xiii. 20; Rom. viii. 34.

tions and trials of life. All the privations, and sufferings, and sorrows of our Lord, terminated in his glorious resurrection; and so shall all the privations, and sufferings, and sorrows of his people. When a Christian, however deeply afflicted, is enabled to remember that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, he may be "troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." He knows that Jesus lives; and the life of Jesus shall, in due time, be made manifest in his mortal flesh, when, in all the extent of meaning belonging to the words, he shall experience "the power of his resurrection," obtaining "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." He can even look death in the face without alarm, and go to the grave with no fear that it is to be his everlasting abode. 'Christ lives, and I shall live also. His grave is empty, and in due time mine shall be empty too—empty, like his, by a glorious resurrection.'

(3.) *It is a motive to diligence and perseverance in duty.*

Finally, we should remember the resurrection of Christ, because it is fitted to present powerful motives to diligence and perseverance in duty, amid all discouragements. It keeps before the mind the great fact, that Jesus is our Lord—the Lord of all. Of this the resurrection is the great evidence. Our Lord "both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living." "God hath given assurance unto all men," by the resurrection of Jesus, that he is the man by whom, during that day which reaches from the resurrection to the end of time, "He is to judge," or rule, "the world."[1] It is the Divine voice—'Hear him—worship him—honour him as you honour me.'

It naturally calls up the thought of the Christian's fellowship with Christ in his resurrection, which the Apostle Paul

[1] Acts xvii. 31.

employs as the grand motive to holy obedience. Planted in the likeness of his resurrection—walking in newness of life,—they learn to "reckon themselves alive unto God, through Jesus Christ their Lord;" and, therefore, "suffer not sin to reign in their mortal bodies," but "yield themselves to God, as those who are alive from the dead." Being risen with Christ, they feel themselves both bound and inclined to "seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at God's right hand;" to "set their affections on things that are above, and not on things that are on the earth;" to "mortify their members that are on the earth," and to "crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts."

And it animates by the thought, that, by a constant continuance in well-doing,—by "forgetting the things that are behind, reaching forth to those things which are before,"—and keeping close to the appointed race-course, we too shall reach the goal and gain the prize—attaining to the resurrection of the dead. It is thus that the apostle exhorts the Hebrew Christians to look to the risen Saviour, while they perseveringly run the race that is set before them;[1] and it is thus that he improves the closely-connected doctrines of Christ's resurrection, and the Christian's resurrection, in the close of that wonderful chapter—the fifteenth of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. "*Therefore*"—because Christ has risen, and ye shall rise, through the efficacy of his atonement, by the exertion of his power,—"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

It is chiefly in reference to this last view of the practical use of the resurrection of Christ, that the apostle here presses the remembrance of it on his son Timothy. "Endure hardness," says he, "as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." 'Devote yourself entirely to his service. As a racer, strive accord-

ing to the laws of the game; as a husbandman, forget not that the labour must precede the partaking of the fruits. "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel." Imitate him, and you shall share in his reward. Be faithful to death, and, like him, you shall have life as your crown. "It is a faithful saying, If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." So numerous and important are the reasons why we should "remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, rose from the dead, according to the apostle's gospel."

Thus have I completed the plan laid before you on entering on the subject. The apostolic testimony respecting our Lord's resurrection, and its claims on our belief and remembrance, have been considered. May they make their due impression; and may every one of us, who are in Christ, be made by these statements, carried home by the Holy Ghost to the mind and heart, to feel more strongly than ever the power of the Saviour's resurrection.

It would be well for the thoughtless sinner, if *he* could be but brought to remember that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Christ is a real living person, able—disposed—to save him, if he will but come to Him in the faith of the Gospel; but if he continue living and dying in unbelief, impenitence, and sin, able—determined—to destroy him!

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

ON THE EVIDENCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

HORSLEY.

WHETHER we consider the number, the means of information, or the veracity, of the witnesses, no testimony can surpass, in its degree of credibility, that which was borne by the apostles to the fact of our Lord's resurrection; and it is a singular circumstance in this testimony, that it is such as no length of time can diminish.

It is founded on the universal principles of human nature,—upon maxims which are the same in all ages, and operate with equal strength on all mankind, under all the varieties of temper and habit of constitution. So long as it shall be contrary to the first principles of the human mind to delight in falsehood, for its own sake; so long as it shall be true that no man willingly propagates a falsehood, to his own detriment, and to no purpose,—so long it will be certain that the apostles were serious and sincere in the assertion of our Lord's resurrection.

So long as it shall be absurd to suppose that twelve men could all be deceived as to the person of a friend, with whom they had all lived three years,—so long it will be certain that the apostles were competent to judge of the truth and reality of the fact which they asserted. So long as it shall belong to the nature of

man to prefer his own interest to that of another,—so long it will be an absurdity to suppose that twelve men should persevere for years in the joint attestation of a falsehood, to the great detriment of every individual of the conspiracy, and without any joint or separate advantage; and so long will it be incredible that the history of our Lord's resurrection was a fiction, which the twelve men (to mention no greater number) conspired to support, with unparalleled fortitude, and with equal folly. So long, therefore, as the evangelical history shall be preserved entire,—that is, so long as the historical books of the New Testament shall be extant in the world,—so long the credibility of the apostles' testimony will remain whole and unimpaired. This preservation of the form and integrity of the apostolic evidence, argues, in the original propagation of the Gospel, that contrivance and forecast in the plan, and that power in the execution, which are far beyond the natural abilities of the human mind, and declare that the whole work and counsel was of God.

It has sometimes been considered as an important objection to Christianity, that our Lord should have shown himself, after his resurrection, not to the public at large, but only "to witnesses chosen before of God," Acts x. 41.

But the fact itself is not to be admitted without some limitation. St Paul, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians (chap. xv. 6), tells us of an appearance of our Lord to more than five hundred brethren at once; and as this is a larger company than, it is probable, could have been assembled in a house, or would have met by accident, we must suppose that they were called together for some express purpose,—perhaps that of beholding with their own eyes their crucified Lord restored to life; and this, probably, in some public situation, from which those who were not "brethren" were not excluded.

Still it is certain that our Lord's appearance after his resurrection was not public, compared with what it had been during his ministry, and that he did not then maintain a familiar conversation with the world. This circumstance, however, is of no real weight, as an objection to the truth of our Lord's resurrection. The reality of any fact is always to be measured by the positive proof which we possess, on one side or on the other.

If no proof is found but what is imperfect in itself, as when the witnesses seem to be few, or their reports contradictory, the fact is questionable. But if any proof exists, in itself unexceptionable, the thing is not to be questioned for the mere want of other proofs, which persons, living at a distance from the time and scene of the business, may imagine it might have had. Men are very apt to lose sight of this principle, which is of great importance in its application to the proofs of our Lord's resurrection. Again, the required proof would, in this instance, have afforded no addition to the evidence of the fact. For, to have seen our Lord ever so often after his resurrection, would have qualified no one to be a witness of the fact, who had not such a previous knowledge of his person as might enable him to perceive and to attest its identity. As, therefore, it is probable they were not many, besides his constant followers, who knew him previously well enough to identify his person, they were the only persons who could give a credible attestation to the fact of his resurrection. Thus the evidence of this fact which we actually have, in the testimony of chosen witnesses, is the greatest of which the fact is naturally capable. No other could have been transmitted as original testimony to posterity,—no other could have been satisfactory to the public at the time.

No. II.

THE CONVERSION OF JONATHAN, A JEW — FIRST A SADDUCEE, THEN A PHARISEE — TO CHRISTIANITY BY THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

SANDEMAN.[1]

HAD Jesus, when buried, like other mortals, remained in the grave, I had stedfastly adhered to the Pharisees, and gloried in

[1] My opinion both of this remarkable extract, and of its remarkable author, cannot be more accurately stated than in the words of Mr Douglas of Cavers,

being one of them, as being convinced that the grand controversy about righteousness, which was carried on with great zeal on both sides, was now fairly decided in their favour, and that they had gained an additional honour by the opposition.

I received a liberal and virtuous education among the Sadducees, who admit no sense of our sacred writings but what they think agreeable to sound philosophy. But happening, about the time that Jesus made his appearance, to fall acquainted with some amiable men of eminent piety among the Pharisees, I began to conceive a liking to their party. I observed that they maintained a more strict temperance, and, in general, a greater purity of life, and that they had more exalted sentiments about the power and character of God than the other party. I made it my business now to attend their lectures and study their tenets, in hopes of being found worthy to rank with them. Meantime, the uncommon opposition shown to them by Jesus drew no small share of my attention, and served, on the whole, rather to increase than to diminish my attachment to them. I considered their sentiments as a great improvement of my former way of thinking, and highly conducive to my advancement in virtue, as well as piety. I readily judged then, that the opposition which was chiefly pointed against what came nearest to perfection, behoved to flow from the worst of causes.

I had a very low opinion of Jesus, as well as of the company he kept, on many accounts, which I shall not now take time to relate. In the general, I thought him a stranger to every

who has honoured it with a place in the Appendix to his valuable work, "On the Truths of Religion:"—"Sandeman deserves praise as the first who utterly discarded all equivocal language in proclaiming the freeness of the Gospel. But this praise is much diminished by his severity in animadverting upon the errors of former writers,—errors, in many cases, merely verbal,—which he exaggerated into grievous and fatal heresies. Though acute in detecting the mistakes of others, his own insight into the truth is not always very profound: he discerned the freeness of the Gospel, at least in part, but knew little of its fulness and certainty. He was an ingenious and independent thinker, but, at the same time, a superficial and presumptuous one. What is most to be regretted, his temper was little imbued with the spirit of Christianity. The following admirable passage (written in the character of a converted Jew, contemporary with the Saviour), in which he rises far above his ordinary level, though long, has been transcribed entire, not as being free from his characteristic faults, but as being more deeply stamped with original thought than any which could be produced on the same subject."

great and noble sentiment which charms and elevates the mind of man. What disaffected me most to him was, I thought him uncharitable to the last degree. I could not reconcile, with any degree of charity or piety, the severe censures he passed upon men of the best established characters. It gave me great disgust to hear him addressing the men whom I myself thought worthy of the highest esteem for everything great and good, in such uncouth language as this, *How can ye escape the damnation of hell!* I thought it intolerable to hear him at the same time declaring, with singular assurance, that he himself was the only favourite of Heaven; that every character of man but his own was the object of the Divine displeasure; yea, without stopping here, with the greatest familiarity calling God his Father, in a sense peculiar to himself; and, without leaving us at any loss to gather his meaning, affirming, *The Father and I are one;* even while he showed rather more zeal than any of us against the least appearance of ascribing any divine attribute or name to any but the one God, or even to himself, in any other view; to hear him, in the very house sacred to the honour of the one God, against the profaning of which he himself had shown the greatest zeal, not only receiving divine praise from his attendants, but receiving it in the very words of the sacred hymns which we used to sing in our most solemn assemblies to the praise of the Most High; yea vindicating this praise as his due, by quoting those very hymns in support of it, and rebuking my zealous friends who complained of this as an abuse.

Let any one put himself in our place, and try how he could have borne all this, joined with many other provoking circumstances of the like nature; or if anything less could have satisfied him, than to have seen matters brought to the extremities to which all parties among us at last agreed to push them.

I must own, indeed, that there was a peculiar energy in the rebukes of Jesus, which made it very difficult for one to resist the force of them. But what alarmed me most was, his performing many works that could not be done by human power; yea, such power appeared in them, that I could not help suspecting, upon occasions, that the finger of God was there, notwithstanding all the pains that were taken to account for them

otherwise. However, as his conduct, on the whole, seemed to me to be so very opposite to the universally received principles of reason and religion, I made the best shift I could to efface any impressions made on my heart from that quarter, concluding, that as the character of God himself must be measured by those principles, it would be absurd to suppose that any revelation coming from him could ever serve to undermine them.

By the same principles, I fortified myself against the prediction delivered by Jesus concerning his rising again from the dead—to which event he had openly appealed for proof of his doctrine; or, which is the same thing, the excellency of his person and character; and what served to give me the greater assurance was, I found my favourite party was very forward to refer the decision of the whole controversy to that same event, as being very confident that it would never happen.

When once Jesus was dead and buried, I thought the dispute as good as ended. But how great was my astonishment, when, not long after, those poor illiterate men, who had been the companions of Jesus, appeared publicly, testifying with uncommon boldness that he had risen again from the dead, according to his prediction; that they were well assured of this by many infallible tokens, and that at last they saw him ascend into heaven; when I saw that no threatenings, no infamy, no punishment, could intimidate them; when, moreover, I observed so many undeniable proofs of supernatural power, co-operating with them, and exerted in the name of Jesus, as risen from the dead! Then the late wonderful works of Jesus, before his death, recurred upon my thoughts. The former impressions I had been at so much pains to stifle, revived fresh upon me. In short, the evidence crowded so fast upon me, from every quarter, I found there was no gainsaying it.

But still I was averse to the last degree to admit it. I was shocked at the train of consequences which behoved to follow. And thus I questioned with myself, Has reason itself deceived me? Do all our best books of divinity and morality proceed upon false principles? Must I give up with all my choicest sentiments? Is there no such thing as wisdom or righteousness in the world? Are all the world fools, and enemies to God, but

these rude Galileans? The reflection is confounding! But what do these men propose? what do they aim at by their alarming the public in this manner with their testimony about the resurrection of Jesus? They can have no good design, no benevolent intention, toward men. They seem rather to be influenced by a most malignant disposition. They certainly intend to bring this man's blood upon us, to prove us all to be enemies to God, and objects of his wrath. They intend to make us desperate and utterly miserable.

With such reflections, whatever inward disquiet I should undergo, I resolved to combat whatever evidence they could produce, till one day that I heard them charged, by some of my friends in authority, with the malevolent purpose I have just now mentioned. But such was their reply, that I think I shall never forget it. They indeed not only allowed, but demonstrated all the consequences I was so averse to admit, with such force and evidence as quite defeated all my resolution. But then they, at the same time, laid open such a treasure of Divine good-will toward men; they drew such a character of God, no less amiable than awful; they laid such a solid foundation of everlasting consolation and good hope, for the most desperate and miserable wretch, as did infinitely more than counterbalance the loss of all my favourite principles, all my fond reasonings, and every worldly advantage I had connected with them. And all this they showed, with the greatest simplicity and clearness, to be the plain meaning and import of the fact which they testified, even the resurrection of Jesus. And they confirmed everything they said, by the unanimous voice of the prophets, whom I had never understood till now. Their doctrine, in respect of authority, resembled the word of a king, against whom there is no rising up; and, in respect of evidence, the light of the sun; or, to use a far more adequate similitude, it resembled the fact which they testified, and whereof it was the meaning. And it well corresponded thereto in its effects, for it proved sufficient to raise the dead, and give hope to the desperate. The fact and its import, the *handwriting* and *interpretation*, equally became the majesty of him who is the *Supreme*.

I saw plainly that, in the resurrection of Jesus, there be-

hoved to be the agency of a *power* superior to the power of nature, even capable to control and reverse the course thereof; therefore I concluded, that this operating *power* was greater than the God of the Sadducees and the philosophers. I found also, that this *power* had a *peculiar character*, manifest from the nature of the controversy, wherein it interposed its agency and gave decision. I found, by the decision, that its character was more grand and perfect, as well as its agency stronger, than that of the God of the Pharisees. As to its agency, it was able to raise from deeper misery to higher blessedness than the Pharisees thought of. As to its character, it appeared, with unlimited sovereignty, *just* and *merciful* in perfection; whereas the God of the Pharisees was such only partially, and by halves, incapable to execute the threatened curse against every sin, and yet show mercy and boundless favour to the transgressors; not so just as to maintain the honour, the spirit, and extent of the perfect law, at all events, nor so merciful as to have any favour for the utterly worthless and wretched, but halving the matter, merciful to men of good repute, and just in accepting those who are deficient in their righteousness; or, in another view, just in exacting the debt of five hundred pence, and merciful in forgiving that of fifty; or, showing justice only against the utterly insolvent, and mercy only to those who can make partial payment; in short (like all created potentates), incapable of appearing at once, without limitation of either attribute, just and merciful in perfection.

I found, then, that the *power* which operated in the resurrection of Jesus, excelled not only in strength, but also in majesty and perfection of character—all that was called God among men. So I perceived no small propriety in the saying of Jesus, *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee.* I concluded, then, that this *power* is the only true God, for that which is *greatest* must be *God.* Thus am I called off from every idol, however highly dignified, whether the work of men's hands or of their imaginations, to adore him who is *higher than the highest.*

I frankly acknowledge, then, that my religion, or my hope toward God, is *not founded on argument*, not on the wisdom of men, but on the *power of God;* not on any deductions from any

principles I had hitherto known, but on *authority* interposed in a manner quite unexpected, baffling, confounding, and repelling all my reasonings; and, if I may be allowed the expression, *forcing* upon me a new set of principles, by the most convincing and satisfactory, as well as irresistible, evidence; not on any reasonings, *a priori*, but on a plain matter of fact, established by impregnable evidence; not on any effort exerted, or any motion felt in my breast, but on that motion of divine power, which burst the bands of death when Jesus rose; not on any operation which men call *mystical*, to avoid saying *unintelligible*, but on the simplest and most striking operation of power that can affect the human mind, even the presenting alive again a man who was dead; not on feeling any change on my heart to the better, or the remotest good inclination of my will, but on that fact which, sore against my will, forced upon me the shocking view of my guilt, and proved me to be an enemy to Heaven, in that respect wherein I thought to have approved and valued myself to my last hour; not on a work of power assisting me to feel, will, or do anything, in order to peace with God, but on a work of power, proving, to demonstration, that everything needful thereto is already completely finished; to say all, in one word, not on any difference betwixt me and others, or any token for good about me whatever, but on the token or proof of Divine good-will, expressed in the resurrection of Jesus, toward sinners of all nations, without regard to any difference, by which one man can distinguish himself from another.

This fact, firm as a rock, emboldens me to pay an equal regard to philosophical guesses and to enthusiastical fancies. If any one, then, should ask me a reason of the hope that is in me, I have only one word to say—*The resurrection of Jesus.* Take away this from me, and I am miserable indeed. Let this stand true, and nothing shall ever make me despair.

This fact and its import, or the character of God thence arising, mutually confirm and ascertain each other. This character could never have been drawn to our view but from some divine work. No work but this could ever evince such a character; and, if this work was done, of necessity there must be

such a character. This fact and its import, then, must stand or fall together. But, more particularly,—

As this divine character can nowhere be published but along with the fact, I am assured, by hearing the *grandest character* thence arising, that the fact must be true. For, to suppose that the bare notion or idea of aught greater than God could ever be anywhere imagined, would be the wildest of all absurdities. And it is very evident, that the view of God, which, the lower it abases the pride of man, raises his comfort and joy the higher —which reduces man to the most unreserved, or to *extreme* dependence, while it exalts him to the *summit* of all happiness,— could never be the contrivance of man, whose strongest impulse is toward the gratifying of his pride, and whose joy naturally rises or sinks according to the success thereof. Therefore, when the fact and its import are conveyed to my knowledge by the same testimony, I have no room to doubt that God, who alone can describe his own character, is the testifier and declarer of both. And, surely, it would be extremely absurd to suppose, that such a divine character could arise from a contrived lie!

Again, It is from this fact that the amiable character of the just God and the Saviour rises to my view. I could never have known that there was such a God, had I not known this fact. But I know that, this fact being true, there must be such a God; because it is impossible to account for it otherwise: yea, every attempt to account for it otherwise, not only extinguishes all my former lights, but, without furnishing me with any new ones, lands me in atheism, in chaos, and utter darkness; whereas the account of it given by the witnesses, while it proves all my former wisdom to be foolishness, opens to me a new and more delightful source of knowledge, throwing light upon a thousand facts that I could never account for before,—showing me a no less wonderful than satisfactory propriety in all the extraordinary circumstances attending the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and the ministry of his witnesses. It throws light upon all the ancient sacred writings, and the extraordinary facts recorded in them, from the creation downward. It sets my mind at rest as to all the difficulties about the Divine character, and the condition of man, which occasionally pinched me

before. I am now reconciled to the entrance of sin and death into the world, and the whole dark side of things, on account of the marvellous light that shines forth from the greatest darkness. I am now reconciled to the shade, on account of the magnificent picture thence arising to my view, and which could not otherwise have appeared. In a word, I thence perceive a no less amiable than grand uniformity of design in all the works of God, from first to last; whereas, should I shut my eyes against the light issuing thence, I am immediately lost in an unfathomable abyss of absurdities.

I know, then, assuredly, when I hear these illiterate men, attended by supernatural power, bearing witness to the fact, declaring the import of it, and speaking (*τὰ μεγαλεῖα τοῦ Θεοῦ*) the grand things of God, I hear God himself speaking—I hear the voice and testimony of God. Divine wisdom and divine power, which are indeed inseparable, present themselves to my conscience at once; my pride is abashed, my reasonings are silenced, and hope arises to me from a new and unexpected source.

Were such a majestic personage as is described by John, in the tenth chapter of the Apocalypse, to appear publicly to our view, would not all our former ideas of human grandeur evanish at his presence? Have the wise men, of almost every succeeding age, exploded the principles maintained by their predecessors, both in ethics and physics? and should it seem a thing incredible to us, that when God, no longer winking at the times of ignorance, was to commence a public speaker and writer to men, he should explode the wisdom of all the teachers who formerly taught mankind? And, if we willingly hear wise men tracing to us the order and connection of facts and appearances in the course of nature, why should we not hear God explaining to us supernatural facts? This seems to be a province proper for the author and controller of nature. It was surely far above the fishers of Galilee.

I am fully satisfied, then, in agreement with the witnesses, to hold the meaning they have given of the resurrection of Jesus, for the *gospel*, the *word*, and the *testimony* of God; and to call it, by way of eminence, THE TRUTH, in opposition to every false gloss on the Scriptures, and every false reasoning about the

light or law of nature, or about any of the works or ways of God. This truth opens for me a plain path, and affords me firm ground for every step; so that I have no occasion to grope among *probabilities* with the academies, or no less uncertain *feelings* with the devotees;—no reason to envy the former the pleasure they propose in their humble, candid, and sincere inquiries after—a phantom, which has hitherto eluded their grasp; or the latter, the more refined delight they propose in their pious wrestlings and waitings for—a good conceit of themselves;—no reason to be scared by the scornful sneer of those, or the more solemn frown of these. Let this truth be my companion, and I shall not be ashamed in the presence of all the sons of Socrates, though joined with those of Gamaliel.

In company with this truth, I dare act the part proper to man. I dare give free scope to my conscience, before God, and look into his perfect law, as knowing that, however heavy the charge turn out against me, the resurrection of Jesus affords the answer of a good conscience toward God, as it shows a righteousness to be already finished, by which God can appear just in justifying me, even in the very worst view I can have of myself; or, which is more, even in the very worst view I can appear in before him, who knows all things. By being thus encouraged to look into the perfect law of liberty, and continue therein, I see the extent of it to be vastly wider than I was hitherto willing to notice. And, by seeing what a righteousness was requisite to honour it, and at what an expense every the least transgression of it behoved to be expiated, I am led to behold every precept of it more sacred than ever I did before. I know that I cannot disregard any precept of it, without, at the same time, disregarding the revealed righteousness. I consider the perfect law—the law that requires godliness and humanity in perfection—as the sacred and invariable rule of correspondence with God. And though, on this side the grave, I cannot come before God at any time, and say, *I have no sin*, yet the TRUTH both binds and encourages me to aim at no less than perfection.

While I keep the perfect law in my view, which, like a faithful mirror, discovers all my deformity, I can find no reason

to glory over the most infamous of mankind. The nearer I come to the light, which makes *manifest all things that are reproved,* I have the more reason to say, *Behold, I am vile.* I can have no room for glorying, then, but in the bare TRUTH; and I have good reason confidently to oppose the righteousness revealed there, to all that is admired in its stead among men.

I now see plainly, that all my former reasonings against Jesus and his character were, at the same time, pointed against the Divine law, and against the natural dictates of my own conscience. I chose to confine the exercise of my conscience to what might distinguish me from others. I took pleasure in reflecting *what I was not*, in comparison with others; but was averse to notice *what I was* before God. When any uneasy question, in this last respect, arose in my heart, I was careful to turn it aside by more agreeable reasonings. If I might, for *once*, call that which properly distinguishes man from other animals—viz., his conscience—by the name of REASON, I would vary the style of the received maxim, and say, *Reason pursued* is despair, and *faith*, or the knowledge of truth, is the cure of despair. Before I knew the cure, I found nothing but pain and misery in listening to the simple dictates of my conscience. And, sure I am, neither conscience nor argument directed me to the cure; but it came to me, unexpectedly, from heaven, by supernatural revelation; that is, when I heard God, by the mouths of the witnesses, laying open the meaning of a supernatural fact,—a fact that had not only awakened fresh disturbance in my conscience, but also demolished all my arguments.

"I was convinced, then, that the revealed truth, which not only awakened my conscience, and made me sensible of my malady, but also brought such relief as was sufficient to satisfy it when most awakened, behoved to come from the same God who formed it, and whose law is naturally impressed there. I found I had hitherto neglected and resisted the natural notices of the true God there, and framed to myself another god by reasonings!—that I had been all along as one half asleep or intoxicated; and who chooses to be so, as not finding his circumstances in so good order as to give him pleasure and satisfaction in his soberest and coolest moments. And, indeed, who would

incline to give place to such apprehensions of God and of himself, as could yield no pleasure nor satisfaction, but, on the contrary, the greatest of all pains; yea, beloved, without the knowledge of the cure, to fill his mind with the most repining hatred of God.

I have great reason, then, to value the Gospel, as it enables me to reflect, without pain, that I am a human creature; as it presents me with such an amiable view of the inflexibly just God, as that I may think of him when fully awake, and need not court the momentary quiet, or rather insensibility, which is procured by resisting the natural notices of God in the conscience, or the more explicit declaration of his will in his written law. The Gospel, while it enforces the law of God, and makes the conscience more sensible to the conviction of sin, conveys likewise the most refreshing remedy,—so answers to the majesty of the living and true God, who says, "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever."[1]

Nor do I think I have any apology to make to men for renouncing my former *ways* and *thoughts*, however righteous they appear to myself and others, upon my being found guilty, beyond reply, by the "one lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy," and demonstrated to be *wicked* and *unrighteous*, in respect of both, by his irresistible work and testimony. I do not think it beneath the dignity of the wisest human creature to be convinced of his mistake by Him, whom it well becomes to say, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."[2]

I used to admire it as a fine imagination, that, were truth and virtue to be presented before our eyes in all their native charms, the beauteous splendour would be too transporting, too dazzling to be beheld by us, but through some vail. The ex-

[1] Deut. xxxii. 39. [2] See Isa. lv. 7-9.

periment has been tried, and that in a manner far surpassing the reach of fancy. The unsullied perfection of both has appeared in the world, in all their native charms indeed, yet so as not to hurt the weakest eye. But what was the result? We saw no form nor comeliness in him,—no beauty that we should desire him. We turned aside our faces from him as from a disagreeable object. The most wise and virtuous among us were the foremost to set him at nought. Yet, however strange it may seem, true it is, that some of the most base and stupid among us were, upon this occasion, struck with such an apprehension of divine beauty, as far exceeds all the raptures of imagination. "The WORD was made flesh," said they, "and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

I have said the resurrection of Jesus serves me as a new principle of knowledge or reasoning. I do not set out from conjectures, to inquire after truth; but I set out with the light of undoubted truth, to observe what path it opens for me to walk in. I do not set out from human maxims or presumptions, to inquire how I shall form a god to myself; but I set out from heavenly truth, stamped with the Divine character, to inquire how I shall form my heart and life suitably to it. I do not set out upon the inquiry, What I shall do to placate the Divine Majesty? or, as the phrase is, How I shall make up my peace with God? but I set out from the persuasion, that God is just in justifying the ungodly; to inquire what service he has for me; to prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

All my religious principles and practices are so many inferences from the aforementioned fact; yet I have no ground to value myself as a *reasoner*, even on this new footing; for I could find no satisfactory meaning at all in that fact, till I was first taught it by the illiterate Galileans. And, what is more, I can deduce no inference from thence, till I be first taught it by one or other of the inspired witnesses. But, when I hear them displaying the manifold wisdom of God from that source, I perceive a wonderful propriety and force in the whole of their reasoning. Thus God sees meet to abase my pride of under-

standing, by the very means he uses for conveying to me the most useful and comfortable of all knowledge. And herein, I am persuaded, he consults my real benefit; for, were I left to indulge my natural itch for reasoning, even on this new footing, I am sensible I should soon act the same part with this supernatural revelation, as I formerly did with the light of nature. When I reflect where all my own wisdom and that of the greatest sages landed me, and that, in the height of my wisdom, I turned out the greatest fool, I am now fully satisfied, that my safest and wisest course is, simply to believe just as I am told, and submissively to do just as I am bidden, without murmuring or disputing. However foolish, then, my rule of faith and practice may appear in the eyes of the WISE, and however weak in the eyes of the DEVOUT, I find myself kept in countenance by the apostolic maxim, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

No. III.

A PARABLE.

HALLETT.

IN the reign of the late Emperor of Morocco, a rich gentleman of the city of Morocco, named Hosiah, made a voyage to Gibraltar. When he was returning home, almost within sight of the coast, a violent storm arose, which made the sea more than ordinarily tempestuous. A furious wave ran through the ship, and washed Hosiah overboard: another wave conveyed him into an English ship, that happened to pass by just at that time in her way to Gibraltar. The people on board the Morocco ship saw Hosiah thrown into the sea, and saw no more of him. Each ship returned to its own country. When the Morocco ship came home, the sailors told the story of Hosiah's fate. Hereupon his next brother seized his estate, and all his effects, and was legally

settled in possession of them; every one concluding that Hosiah was drowned. But not long after he arrived at Gibraltar, he found an opportunity of a passage to Morocco. Upon his return home, finding his estate and effects in the possession of his brother, who refused to deliver them up, he appealed to the law, and demanded them in a court of justice. The brother pleaded that Hosiah was drowned; and that, therefore, this person, who now claimed the estate, was a counterfeit and impostor. Hosiah assured the judges that he was the same person as he pretended to be; and, therefore, had an indisputable right to the estate. The emperor, hearing of this uncommon case, was moved by his curiosity to sit himself in judgment upon it. He first examined the people of the Morocco ship, in which Hosiah first put to sea, who all assured him that Hosiah was washed overboard in the high seas, at a distance from land, and that they saw him no more. The emperor next examined Hosiah, who told his majesty that he was indeed washed overboard, but that, in that very moment, another ship passed by (not observed by the sailors because of the tempest and a fog), into which another wave happily conveyed him; by which means he was preserved. As none of this ship's crew were present to attest this fact, the emperor would not depend upon his story. Hosiah therefore desired liberty to call in some substantial witnesses, who should prove that (by what means soever he was preserved) he was indeed the true Hosiah. Eight such witnesses appeared, and swore that this was really Hosiah; that they had been intimately acquainted with him for three or four years together, before his first going to sea, and had conversed with him every day for a full month since his return; and that, therefore, they could not be deceived in the person. Upon this, most that heard the trial were sufficiently satisfied that this person was really the Hosiah whom he pretended to be; the evidence seemed to them to be fully strong and unexceptionable. But the emperor was strongly biased in favour of the younger brother; for which reason he was resolved, if possible, to make these eight evidences revoke and contradict their testimony. He therefore threatened them, that if they would not own they were bribed, and had given false evidence, he would order every one of them to be put to death.

by torture. They said they had been so long acquainted with Hosiah, and were so very sure, from many circumstances, that this was the same person, that they would rather suffer any kind of death than deny the truth. Accordingly, they all, to a man, persisted in their evidence to the last, and were actually put to death, because they would not revoke their testimony; while the emperor offered them their lives, and some distinguished honours, if they would comply with his demands. The spectators of their courage, perseverance, and death, could not but conclude that these eight evidences had testified nothing but the truth; and there is the greatest reason in the world to think so. Surely it cannot be thought that they were mistaken as to the person of Hosiah. They were too long and too intimately acquainted with him, and the time of his absence at Gibraltar was too short, to make it possible for them to be at any uncertainties about him. It is most unquestionable that the eight witnesses knew what was the truth in the case. If the person who now demanded the estate was not Hosiah, they must know that it was not he. But if it was really Hosiah, they could not but be sure that here was no imposture; so that there is no room to suspect their want of understanding and experience in the case. And, I am sure, there is as little to imagine there was any want of honesty and sincerity in their testimony. They had no worldly temptation whatever to persist in saying that Hosiah was returned; they got nothing at all by giving their testimony. Nay, on the other hand, they lost all they had in this world: all their riches, honours, and pleasures, and even their lives too, for the sake of testifying that Hosiah was come home alive, and in health. It cannot, then, be thought that these witnesses had a regard to anything but truth in the testimony they gave. If they had been men of dishonest principles, they would undoubtedly have revoked their testimony to save their lives. As they could get nothing in this world by their testimony, it can never be imagined they would have persisted in it, if they had not been very sure that Hosiah was returned from sea: and they could not but be sure, because their friend had been absent but a few days. Conducted by such reasoning, almost all that knew the facts of the story are fully satisfied that

their evidence is true, and that Hosiah was really preserved, and restored to his country; yet still the emperor would not be convinced, but settled Hosiah's brother in possession of the whole estate. The reader, who is no way interested in the story, one way or another, and who can judge freely, without any influence of worldly hope or fear, will undoubtedly condemn the emperor as very partial, unreasonable, and cruel. It is a plain case, he ought to have believed the evidence of eight such substantial witnesses, and to have restored Hosiah to his estate.

As the reader has already condemned the unreasonable conduct of the partial emperor; so, for the same reason, he cannot but condemn the more unreasonable conduct of those among us who will not receive the testimony of the apostles concerning the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the intimate acquaintance that Hosiah's friends had with him for above three years together, made it impossible for them to be mistaken in the man, the intimate acquaintance of the apostles with Christ, for full as long a time, must have made it equally impossible for them to be deceived by any one that should come to them in his name, and converse familiarly with them for forty days together. If Hosiah's friends demonstrated their sincerity by giving up all the comforts of life, and life itself, rather than revoke their testimony, there is at least as much proof of the sincerity of the apostles in testifying the resurrection of Jesus, since they were so far from getting anything of this world by speaking in his favour, that, on the contrary, by this means they lost all the comforts and accommodations of this world, and their own lives into the bargain. The writers of the New Testament are eight, who all concur in giving the same testimony. Now, I would desire to know of any man, who calls himself a Deist, whether he would not receive the testimony of the eight men of Morocco before-mentioned; and whether he does not blame the emperor for not believing them, when they gave the strongest possible proof of their testimony, by sealing it with their blood? If so, let him consider whether he is not much more unreasonable in not believing the resurrection of Christ, upon the testimony of the eight writers of the New Testament, and of many others also, who likewise sealed their testimony with their blood.

Whatever reasons he can give for his believing the friends of Hosiah, will equally, at least, oblige him to believe the disciples of Jesus. And if he will not believe them (though they could not be mistaken, and proved by their sufferings that they were sincere in their testimony), I should be glad to be informed for what reasons he would believe the friends of Hosiah. A serious comparison of these things must needs satisfy any impartial searcher after truth, that the apostles have given us sufficient evidence of the resurrection of Jesus, which is what I intended to establish by this parable.

No. IV.

A SECOND PARABLE.

HALLETT.

A GENTLEMAN of the country, upon the occasion of some signal service his man had done him, gave him a curious silver cup. David (for that was the man's name) was exceedingly fond of the present, and preserved it with the greatest care. But one day, by accident, his cup fell into a vessel of aqua fortis: he, taking it to be no other than common water, thought his cup safe enough; and therefore neglected it till he had dispatched an affair of importance, about which his master had employed him, imagining it would be then time enough to take out his cup. At length a fellow-servant came into the same room, when the cup was near dissolved; and, looking into the aqua fortis, asked David, Who had thrown anything into that vessel? David said that his cup accidentally fell into that water. Upon this, his fellow-servant informed him that it was not common water, but aqua fortis, and that his cup was almost dissolved in it. When David heard this, and was satisfied of the truth of it with his own eyes, he heartily grieved for the loss of his cup; and, at the same time, he was astonished to see the liquor as

clear as if nothing at all had been dissolved in it, or mixed with it. As, after a little while, he saw the small remains of it vanish, and could not now perceive the least particle of the silver, he utterly despaired of ever seeing his cup more. Upon this, he bitterly bewailed his loss with many tears, and refused to be comforted. His fellow-servant, pitying him in this condition of sorrow, told him that their master could restore him the very same cup again. David disregarded this as utterly impossible. "What do you talk of?" says he to his fellow-servant. "Do you not know that the cup is entirely dissolved, and that not the least bit of the silver is to be seen? Are not all the little invisible parts of the cup mingled with aqua fortis, and become parts of the same mass? How, then, can my master, or any man alive, produce the silver anew, and restore my cup? It can never be; I give it over for lost: I am sure I shall never see it again." His fellow-servant still insisted that their master could restore the same cup; and David as earnestly insisted that it was absolutely impossible. While they were debating this point, their master came in, and asked them what they were disputing about? When they had informed him, he said to David, "What you so positively pronounced to be impossible, you shall see me do with very little trouble. Fetch me," said he to the other servant, "some salt water, and pour it into the vessel of aqua fortis." "Now look," says he, "the silver will presently fall to the bottom of the vessel in a white powder." When David saw this, he began to have good hopes of seeing his cup restored. Next his master ordered a servant to drain off the liquor, and to take up the powdered silver and melt it. Thus it was reduced into one solid piece; and then, by the silversmith's hammer, formed into a cup of the same shape as before. Thus David's cup was restored with a very small loss of its weight and value.

It is no uncommon thing for men, like David in this parable, to imagine that to be impossible, which yet persons of greater skill and wisdom than themselves can easily perform. David was as positive that his master could not restore his cup, as unbelievers are, that it is incredible God should raise the dead; and he had as much appearance of reason on his side as they.

If a human body, dead, crumbles into dust, and mingles with the earth, or with the water of the sea, so as to be discernible no more, so the silver cup was dissolved into parts invisible, and mingled with the mass of aqua fortis. Is it not then easy to be conceived, that as a man has wisdom and power enough to bring these parts of the silver to be visible again, and to reduce them to a cup as before,—so God, the maker of heaven and earth, must have wisdom and power enough to bring the parts of a dissolved human body together, and to form them into a human body again? What though David could not restore his own cup? Was that a reason that no man could do it? And when his master had promised to restore it, what though David could not possibly conjecture by what method his master would do it? This was no proof that his master was at a loss for a method. So, though *men* cannot raise the dead, yet *God*, who is infinitely wiser and stronger, can. And though we cannot find out the method by which He will do this, yet we are sure that He who at first took the dust of the ground, and formed it into the body of man, can, with the same ease, take the dust into which my body shall be resolved, and form it into a human body again. Nay, even if a body be burnt, and consumed by fire, the parts of that body are no more really lost than the invisible particles of the dissolved cup. As David, then, was wrong in thinking that it was impossible for his master to restore his cup, it must be at least equally wrong for us to think it impossible that God should raise the dead.

INDEX.

I.—PRINCIPAL MATTERS.

Acquiescence due to the Gospel, 57.
Adam a public character, 124.
Animal frame, effect of revelation of unseen things on, 210.
Aorist used as the pluperfect, 173.
Analysis, prefatory, of 1 Cor. xv. 1.
Apostles not impostors, 265.
Apostles not deluded, 266.
Apostolic testimony for the resurrection of Christ, evidence of, 258.
Ascension of our Lord, 257.
Attention due to, and required by, the Gospel, 49.

Baptism for the dead—what? 158.
Baptism from the dead, Jewish rite of, 160.
Baptism, figurative sense of the word, 160.
Baptism in the room of the dead, 162.
Baptism over the dead, 163.
Baptism in the prospect of death, 163.
Baptism of the dead, 164.
——————— condemned by Council of Carthage, 164.
Baptism for dead things, 165.
Baptism in place of the dead, 167.
Burial of Christ, 17.
Burial of Christ proof of the reality of his death, 18.
Burial of Christ "according to the Scriptures," 18.

"Celestial bodies"—what? 188.
Change in the apostles, a proof of the resurrection of Christ, 262.
Christ, *who* he is, 11.
Christ, meaning of the designation, 13.
Christ a public character, 124.
Conclusion of the dissertation, 219.
Condition, man's original, what it was, 7.
Condition, man's natural, what it is, 79.
Conscience relieved by the resurrection of Christ, 275.
Consequences of denying the resurrection, 99.
Consequences of denying the resurrection of Christ, 103.
Consolation derived from the resurrection of Christ, 275.
Constantine's baptism, circumstances of, 163.
Contagiousness of error and vice, 175.
Credibility of the apostles as witnesses to Christ's resurrection, 264.

Death of the Messiah for sin predicted, 15.
Death of the Messiah for sin asserted, 16.
Death, the punishment of the first sin of the first man, 126.
Death, how an enemy, 151.
Death, how the last enemy, 152.
Death, destruction of—what? 152.
"Delivering up the kingdom"—what? 138.
Destruction of death—what? 152.
"Die daily," meaning of the expression, 170.
Difference between the present and the resurrection-body, 189; the one corruptible, the other incorruptible, 190; the one degraded, the other glorious, 191; the one weak, the other powerful, 193; the one natural, the other spiritual, 193.

Divinity of Christ proved by his resurrection, 273.
Doctrinal importance of the resurrection of Christ, 270.
" Dying for sin," meaning of the term, 14.

Efficacy of Christ's sacrifice proved by his resurrection, 273.
Epicureans, morality of, 174.
Evidence of the apostolic testimony to the resurrection of Christ, 258.
Excelling in the work of the Lord recommended, 233.
Exhortation, concluding, 229.

Facts of Scripture, importance of holding by, 113.
Faith due to the Gospel 52.
Faith, what it is, 52.
" Faith vain "—what? 106.
" Fallen asleep in Christ "—who? 107.
Fight with beasts, Paul's—what? 172.
" First-fruits of them who sleep," meaning of the phrase, 121.
" Flesh and blood," meaning of the phrase, 206.
Folly of questioning the possibility of the resurrection, 181.

Gospel, the, reference of the term, 7.
Gospel, meaning of the word, 7.
Gospel, the, what it supposes, 8.
Gospel, the, substance of, 7, 20.
Gospel, the, right way of preaching, 26.
Gospel, the, facts of, importance of stating, 28.
Gospel, the, evidence of, importance of stating, 29.
Gospel hearers, duty of, 44.
Gospel, how it saves from guilt, 88.
Gospel, how it saves from depravity, 89.
Gospel, how it saves from misery, 90.

Hazards of first teachers of Christianity, 169.

Ignorance of the Gospel, 48.
Ignorance of God the source of error, speculative and practical, in religion, 177.
Ignorance of God shameful in a professed Christian, 177.
Impossibility of man, in his present body, enjoying the celestial state, 208.
" In the Lord," force of the expression, 238.
Influence, divine, necessary in order to saving faith, 55.
" Inherit incorruption," meaning of the expression, 208.
" Inheriting the kingdom of God "—what? 206.
" In vain," meaning of the term, 91.

Jonathan, conversion of, 283.

Kingdom, mediatorial, of Christ, everlasting, 136.
" Kingdom of God," meaning of the phrase, 205.
" Kingdom, the," meaning of, 138.

Law, the, how the strength of sin, 224.
" Living soul," import of the expression, 198.

Misery, peculiar, of Christians, if there be no resurrection, 109.
Mode of the resurrection, objections in reference to, 184.
Motives to stedfastness and progress, 236.
" Mystery," meaning of the word, 213.

" Natural body," meaning of the expression, 193.

Objections against the resurrection answered, 179.
Order, the importance of, in preaching the Gospel, 37.

" Perished," force of the word, 108.
Possibility of the resurrection, 180.
Power and authority, unlimited, of the risen Saviour, 142.
Preaching, technical, remarks on, 41.
Preaching, figurative, remarks on, 43.
" Preaching vain "—what? 103.
Purification from the dead, *rationale* of, 161.

" Quickening spirit," import of the expression, 199.

Reception of the Gospel—what? 45.
" Rejoicing " of Paul and the Corinthians—what? 171.
Repetition necessary in preaching the Gospel, 43.
Resurrection of Christ " according to the Scriptures," 19.
Resurrection of Christ proof of the efficacy of his death, 19.
Resurrection of Christ, 28.
Resurrection of Christ, evidence of, 32.
Resurrection, denial of, inconsistent with the belief of the Gospel, 93.
Resurrection, Jewish meaning of the word, 94.
Resurrection, Sadducean doctrine of, 95.
Resurrection of the just, the exclusive subject of 1 Cor. xv. 96.
Resurrection of Christ, varied power of, 113.

Resurrection of Christ secures the resurrection of his people, 114.
Resurrection of Christians secured by the resurrection of Christ, 114.
Resurrection of Christ, what led to it, 120.
Resurrection of life, the reward of the righteousness of the second man, 127.
Resurrection, why deferred till the end of the world, 131.
Resurrection of the saints secured by our Lord's dominion, 134.
Resurrection of Christ, on the, 243.
Resurrection of Christ, necessity of often stating the truth respecting, 244.
Resurrection of Christ, apostolic testimony respecting, 247.
Resurrection of Christ, importance of, 270.
Resurrection of Christ a threefold attestation of the truth of Christianity, 271.
Resurrection of Christ a special attestation of particular doctrines, 272.
Resurrection, general, proved by the resurrection of Christ, 274.
Resurrection of Christ, practical importance of, 274.
Resurrection of Christ a motive to diligence and perseverance, 276.
Retention of the Gospel—what? 62.

Salvation, what it is, 77.
Salvation from guilt, 82.
Salvation from depravity, 84.
Salvation from misery, 85.
Salvation, how dependent on the Gospel, 87.

"Same," ambiguity of the word, 185.
Scripture, Holy, the storehouse of christian truth and evidence, 35.
Sepulchre of our Lord, empty, a proof of his resurrection, 259.
Simplicity, importance of, in preaching the Gospel, 40.
Sin, how the sting of death, 222.
"Sown," import of the body being 190.
"Spiritual body," meaning of the expression, 195.
Stedfastness, immoveable, recommended, 230.
Sting of death, how taken from it, 225.
Strangeness of the resurrection no presumption against its truth, 267.
Submission, practical, due to the Gospel, 58.
System, advantages and disadvantages of, 38.

Tendency, immoral, of the denial of the resurrection, 174.
"Terrestrial bodies"—what? 188.
Testimony of the apostles, immediate credit given to, a proof of Christ's resurrection, 263.
Thanksgiving, concluding, 220.
"They who are Christ's," meaning of the phrase, 130.
"To be in sin"—what? 106.
Trumpet, the last—what? 214.
"Twelve, the," import of the term, 32.

"Victory, in," meaning of the phrase, 215.

Washing of the dead, 165.

II.—GREEK WORDS OR PHRASES REMARKED ON.

Ἅιδης, 221.
Αἱ γεαφαὶ, 36.
Ἀναστασις νεκρῶν 96.
Ἀποθνήσκειν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, 8, 14.
Ἀρα, 102.

Βασιλεία, 138.

Γνωρίζω, 7.

Δεῖ, 214
Δικαίως, 176.
Δόξα, 187.
Δωδεκάφυλον, 32.

Εἰ, 97.
Εἰκῆ πιστεύειν, 92.
Ἐκνήφειν, 176.
Ἔκτρωμα, 33.
Ἐν Κυρίῳ, 238.
Ἐν πρώτοις, 38.
Ἔνδεκα 32.
Ἐνδύσασθαι, 215.
Ἐπάνω, 32.
Ἐτεὶ 157.
Ἐπιθανάτιοι, 166.
Εὐαγγέλιον, 7.

Θηρία, 173.
Θηριομαχία, 173.

Ἴδιον, 187.

Κατὰ Θεοῦ, 104.
Κατέχετε, 63.
Κέντρον, 221.

Λόγος, 215.

Μένουσι, 33, 184.
Μυστήριον, 212.

Νῖκος, 215.
Νυνὶ, 115.

Οἱ δώδεκα, 32.
Ὅτι, 204.
Οὐκ ἔστιν, 97.

Πάντα εἶναι, 153.
Παραδίδωμι, 138.
Παρελαβετε, 44, 45.
Πῶς, 97.

Σάρκα καὶ αἷμα, 207.

Στῆναι, 62.
Σῶμα πνευματικὸν, 196.
Σώματα ἐπουράνια, 188.

Τάγμα, 129.
Τάξις, 129.
Τί ποιήσουσι, 158.
Τίνι λόγῳ, 77.
Τὸ τέλος, 119.
Τότε, 215.
Τοῦτο, 203.
Τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ, 135.

Τῷ ἀμαρτίαν, 106.

Φορέσομεν, 201.
Φορέσωμεν, 201.
Φύραμα, 122.
Φυσικὸν, 194.

Ψυχὴ, 194.
Ψυχικὸν, 194.

III.—AUTHORS QUOTED OR REFERRED TO.

Akiba, Rab., 214.
Alberti, 159.
Alexander, John, 92, 96, 124, 166.
Alexander, W. L., 102.
Ambrose, 162, 223.
Ammon, 98.
Amyraut, 153, 163, 179.
Aretius, 163.
Augustine, 163, 182, 196, 213.

Balmer, 191, 203.
Baronius, 162.
Battier, 159.
Baxter, Richard, 34.
Belsham, 120.
Bengel, 44, 119, 130, 215.
Bertram, 160.
Beza, 165, 176, 190.
Biblical Repository, 138, 146.
Billroth, 38, 101, 162, 196, 213.
Blair, R., 201.
Bloomfield, 8.
Bochart, 162.
Bonnet, 197.
Bos, 159.
Boston, 191.
Bowyer, 173.
Braunius, 160.
Brown, David, 96, 130.
Bullerius, 166.
Burmann, 160.
Bush, 136.

Callimachus, 107.
Calixtus, 159.
Calmet, 173.
Calvin, 101, 102, 147, 163, 190, 201, 221.
Camero, 162, 166, 198.
Campbell, 212.
Casaubon, 162.
Cecil, 246.
Christian Repository, 182.
Chrysostom, 7, 33, 38, 101, 102, 166, 188, 190, 207, 213.
Cicero, 169.
Claude, 159.
Cocceius, 160, 215.

Dallæus, 158, 162.
Dassovius, 94.
De Moulin, 162.
De Wette, 97, 101, 104, 106, 169, 190, 215, 221, 225.
Deylingius, 167.
Diodati, 162.
Doddridge, 63, 167.
Döderlein, 167.
Drusius, 161.

Ecclus. xxxiv. 25, 161; xiv. 18, 206.
Eckermann, 98.
Eisenmenger, 214.
Ellys, 167.
Epictetus, 158.
Epimenides, 173.
Epiphanius, 99, 163.
Episcopius 159 162.
Estius, 190.

Eusebius, 163, 172.

Fabricius, 166.
Facius, 165.
Flaccus, 170.

Gerdes, 122, 124, 129, 165, 173, 184, 188, 213.
Glassite Hymn, 22.
Glassius, 163.
Gregory Nazianzen, 229.
Griesbach, 118, 168.
Grotius, 7, 10, 38, 96, 97, 101, 107, 162, 181, 190, 212.

Hagen, 173.
Hallett, 296, 300.
Hammond, 166.
Heber, 24.
Heinsius, 137.
Henke, 98.
Henry, M., 169, 229.
Heumann, 167.
Heydenreich, 33, 162, 184, 187, 190, 213.
Hombergk, 159.
Hoogeveen, 157, 166.
Horsley, 281.
Howe, 217.
Hyperius, 163.

Ignatius, 173.

Jéhne, 129, 165, 182.
Jerome, 142, 166, 175.
Johnston, R., 183.
Junius, 167.

Kidder, 221.
Kindler, 173.
Kitto, 13.
Knapp, 94, 101, 102, 135, 197.
Krause, 36, 62, 119, 153, 165.

Lachmann, 116, 168, 175, 181, 222.
Lactantius, 173.
Launay, 159.
Lawson, Dr, 107, 139, 214.
Le Clerc, 167.
L'Enfant et Beausobre, 91.
Leigh, 172, 224.
Le Moyne, 160.
Lightfoot, 160.
Lintrupius, 173.
Livy, 176.
Locke, 159.
Lucas, 229.
Luther, 163.

Macknight, 129, 159, 214, 222.
M'Laurin, 39.
Maius, 107.
Markland, 173.
Marloratus, 163.
Martyr, P., 163.
Matthæi, 222.
Mauduit, 159.
Maximus Taurinensis, 17.
Menander, 175.
Meyer, 101, 190.
Milton, 222.
Morus, A., 166.
Morus, S., 179, 187, 200.
Mosheim, 124, 159.
Mullerus, 165.
Musculus, viii.

Neander, 162, 263.
Newcome, 167.
Nicephorus, 173.
Nösselt, 159.

Œcumenius, 7, 43, 190, 221.
Olearius, 166.
Olshausen, 10, 38, 102, 123, 166, 167, 168, 198, 213, 215.
Origen, 185.
Ovid, 92.

Pearson, 123.
Philo, 170, 173.
Piscator, 163.
Pliny, 95.
Plutarch, 33, 92.
Prudentius, 172, 181.
Pseudo-Damasus, 171.

Raphelius, 104.
Rivet, A., 166.
Ruckert, 101, 159.

Sa. Em., 196.
Sadeel, 163.
Sanchez, 129.
Sandeman, 283.
Scaliger, 162, 173.
Scapula, 129.
Schleusner, 138, 159.
Schmid, E., 176.
Schmid, Seb., 160.
Schoetgen, 188.
Scholz, 118.
Schulz, 159.
Schurmann, A. M., 159.
Scott, 167.
Scougall, 229.
Seiler, 166.
Simon, 162.
Spanheim, 158, 165, 167, 168.
Storr, 141.

Tertullian, 99, 167, 172, 175, 207, 212.
Theodoret, 101, 122, 129, 138, 173, 190, 196, 201, 207, 221.
Theodotion, 215.
Theophylact, 32, 43, 101, 104, 129, 136, 137, 138, 164, 173, 207, 215, 221, 238.
Theophilus Antiochenus, 181.
Theses Salmurienses, 154, 179.
Thomson, 199.

Tischendorf, 118, 222.
Turretine, 159.

United Presbyterian Magazine, 160.
Usteri, 101.

Valckenär, 14, 32, 33, 169.
Valkenburg, 146.
Van Dale, 162.
Vasquez, 160.
Vater, 166.
Verpoorteen, 122.
Vitringa, 196.
Vossius, G. J., 163.
Vossius, J. G., 163.
Vulgate, 200.

Wakefield, 104.
Walker, John, 22, 159.
Wall, 162.
Wetstein, 214.
Whately, 219.
Whitby, 166.
Wiclif, 193.
Winer, 97, 166.
Wisd. ii. 1-9, 175; ix. 15, 16, 196.
Witsius, 173.
Worthington, J., 229, 234.

Zeltner, 133, 173.
Ziegler, 159.
Zonaras, 164.

IV.—TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE REMARKED ON OR REFERRED TO.

	Page
Genesis ii. 7,	200
... ii. 17,	224
... iii. 19,	224
Exodus xxxiii. 20,	210
Leviticus xxiii. 10, 11.	122
Numbers xix.,	160
2 Samuel ii. 26,	215
Job xix. 26,	211
Psalm i. 5,	96
... ii. 6-9,	144
... viii. 6,	140
... xvi. 10,	271
.. xvi. 10, 11,	144
.. xix. 11,	239
.. xxi. 1, 3 5,	144
.. xxii. 13, 21,	173
.. xliv. 22,	170
.. xlv. 3-6,	144
.. lxxii. 9-11,	144
... lxxxix. 27,	144
.. cxix. 165,	239
Isaiah ix. 6, 7,	144
.. xxiii 13,	174
xxv. 8,	215
xxxiv. 10,	216
.. lii. 13,	144
.. liii. 4, 5, 11, 12,	16
.. liii. 8, 9,	271
... lix. 16-19,	149
.. lix. 17,	215
Lamentations v. 20,	215
Ezekiel xxxvii.	212
Daniel x. 4-10,	210
Hosea xiii. 14,	220
Habakkuk iii. 16,	210
Matthew x. 23,	194
... xi. 21,	173
... xvi. 17,	207
.. xxii. 30,	96, 196
... xxii. 32,	94
... xxv. 34,	206
... xxvii. 57-66,	249
... xxviii. 1, 5,	250
... xxviii. 2,	173
.. xxviii. 5-9,	251
... xxviii. 12-16,	259
.. xxviii. 16-20,	256
... xxviii. 5-9,	251
Mark v. 8,	173
... xv. 43, 47,	249
... xv. 44,	248
... xvi. 1, 5,	250
... xvi. 4-9,	251
... xvi. 14,	254
xvi. 21,	272
Luke vii. 21,	173
.. ix. 29,	191
ix. 32, 33,	210
xx. 35,	96
xxii. 29,	206

	Page
Luke xxiii. 50, 51,	249
... xxiv. 1-12,	252
... xxiv. 13-36,	254
... xxiv. 22, 23, 34,	253
... xxiv. 39,	211
... xxiv. 49,	215, 256
... xxiv. 50-53,	257
John i. 1-5, 10, 14,	12
... ii. 19,	272
... v. 28, 29,	186
... vi. 39,	227
... viii. 58,	13
... xix. 34,	248
... xix. 38-42,	249
... xx. 1-19,	252
... xx. 19-24,	254
... xx. 24-29,	255
... xx. 29,	251
... xxi. 1-15,	255
Acts i. 4-9,	256
... i. 9-12,	257
... iv. 1-23,	261
... iv. 8-31,	263
... vii. 60,	186
... ix. 37,	165
... xvii. 31,	276
... xxiv. 15,	96
... xxvi. 13,	191
Romans i. 4,	272
... iii. 9,	106
... iii. 21,	115
... iii. 25,	17
... iv. 24, 25,	244
... iv. 25,	14
... v. 12-14,	224
... v. 12-19,	124, 125
... v. 14,	199
... v. 17,	206
... vi. 9-14,	237
... vii. 11,	224
... vii. 17,	115
... viii. 8, 5,	207
... viii. 10, 11,	94
... viii. 34,	275
... x. 9,	244
... xiii. 14,	215
... xiv. 17,	209
1 Corinthians i. 8,	135
... ii. 14,	195
... iii. 8,	240
... v. 11,	115
... vi. 13,	196
... vii. 14,	115
... xii. 20,	115
... xiv. 6,	115
... xv. 5,	253
... xv. 7,	256
... xv. 8,	257
... xv. 10,	235
2 Corinthians i. 8, 9,	171
2 Corinthians iv. 1, 2,	164
... iv. 2,	105
... iv. 9, 11-13,	169
... iv. 11,	172
... v. 8,	215
... v. 19-21,	17
... v. 20,	167
... xi. 23-28,	171
... xii. 9,	172
... xii. 12,	105
Galatians iii. 8,	7
... iv. 10, 11,	164
... vi. 9,	235
... vi. 10,	234
Ephesians iii. 13,	172
... iv. 4-6,	10
... iv. 14,	231
... iv. 24,	215
... vi. 12,	207
Philippians iii. 8-12,	128
... iii. 11,	96
... iii. 12,	231
... iii. 20, 21,	227
... iii. 21,	186, 213
Colossians i. 14-16,	16
... i. 16,	13
... iii. 1,	237
... iii. 10,	215
... iii. 11,	153
1 Thessalonians iv. 1,	235
... iv. 14, 17,	107
... iv. 16, 17,	227
... v. 21,	232
2 Thessalonians ii. 10,	105
1 Timothy ii. 5,	12
... iii. 16,	13
... iv. 8,	239
2 Timothy i. 13,	231
... ii. 17, 18,	98
... ii. 8,	243
... iii. 14,	231
... iv. 16, 17,	173
Titus i. 12,	173
... ii. 12,	234
Philemon 13,	167
Hebrews i. 3, 4, 8,	13
... ii. 8, 9,	141
... ii. 14,	207
... ii. 17,	12
... iii. 6,	231
... iv. 2,	7
iv. 12,	225
... vi. 1, &c.,	10

	Page
Hebrews ix. 11-15,	17
... x. 1-13,	17
.. xii. 1, 2,	237
.. xiii. 9,	233
.. xiii. 20,	275
James ii. 14,	174
... iii. 15.	195
1 Peter iii. 15,	246
2 Peter i. 5-9,	235
.. iii. 17,	
1 John i. 1, 2,	12
... iv. 1,	232
1 John iv. 2,	10
Jude 19,	195
Revelation i. 11,	13
... i. 13-15,	192
... i. 17,	210
... iii. 21,	206
.. v. 6,	211
... vii. 9-17,	240
.. xiv. 13,	107
... xvi. 3,	194
... xix. 11-21,	150
xx. 13,	186
... xx. 14,	153
... xx. 11-14,	216

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